

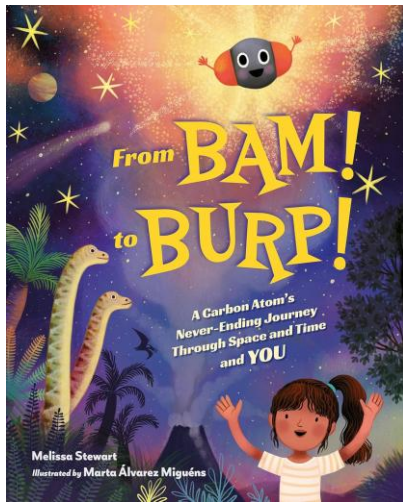
From BAM! to BURP!

A Carbon Atom's Never-ending Journey through Space and Time and YOU

By Melissa Stewart

illustrated by Marta Álvarez Miguéns

About the Book



Get ready for an epic adventure, *From BAM! to BURP!*

Follow a carbon atom on its incredible journey over billions of years. You'll discover that it's been part of all kinds of things, including a small planet that crashed into Earth, gases that erupted from a volcano, a dinosaur, an eggshell, a seashell, a lump of coal, and even a sheet of toilet paper!

Not long ago, the carbon atom became part of a towering maple tree and then a drop of maple syrup on YOUR pancakes! Imagine it traveling through your body. And finally, when you let out a deep breath, the carbon left your lungs, met up with a blast of gas from your stomach, and . . . BURP!

Where will the intrepid atom go next? It's anyone's guess.

Before You Read

Invite children to look at the front and back cover of *From BAM! to BURP!*. Then ask the following questions:

- What do you think this book will be about?
- Where do you think it takes place?
- When do you think it takes place?
- Do you think the book will be fiction (a made-up story) or nonfiction (true information)?

After You Read

Revisit the question you asked before reading the book: Do you think this book is fiction (a made-up story) or nonfiction (true information)?

After inviting students to share their ideas, let them know that there is a third category of book. Informational fiction includes true information, but it also has some made up elements. *From BAM! to BURP!* was carefully researched and the chain of events could really happen, but the text doesn't follow the path of an actual atom. And of course, atoms and molecules don't really have faces and arms. The illustrator added those elements to help you identify the star of our story and follow that atom's movements.

Next, discuss the following questions with your class: Do the fictional elements in *From*

BAM! to BURP! make the scientific information easier to understand? Do they make the book more fun to read?

Finally, encourage each child to draw a picture of their favorite scene in the book. Allow time for children to explain their pictures to the rest of the group.

Extension Activity

Purpose: To help students get a sense of the process the author of a nonfiction or informational picture book author goes through when they review sketches created by an illustrator.

Process:

1. After your students write nonfiction about a topic of their choice, invite children in another classroom at the same grade level to create one or more illustrations for the text. Like professional authors and illustrators, the students don't meet or don't speak to one another.
2. Your students review the artist's work to make sure everything in the art is accurate.
3. Students write a polite letter asking the artist for any necessary changes. They can comment on accuracy only. They can't make any comments about the style of the art.

Questions:

- Are you surprised that the author and illustrator of a book work in this way?
- Do you think it would be helpful if they could talk to one another? Why?
- Author Melissa Stewart has written more than 200 nonfiction books for children. Do you think she was surprised when she saw the fictional elements in Marta Álvarez Miguéns's illustrations?

Read Aloud Guide for *From BAM! to BURP! A Carbon Atom's Never-ending Journey through Space and Time and YOU* by Melissa Stewart (Charlesbridge, 2025) ISBN 978-1-62354-446-1 Copyright © 2025, Melissa Stewart. It may be copied for educational or bookstore use but may not be reprinted or resold for commercial purposes. www.melissa-stewart.com