



How to Be on the Moon

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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'Let's go to the moon!' said Anna.

'But that's out in space,' said Crocodile. 'Space is dark, and there's nobody there, and the moon is really very far away. It will be almost impossible.'

'I like that,' said Anna. 'Let's go!'

Many would be daunted by a trip to the Moon, but not Anna. Her stalwart companion, Crocodile, does his best to keep her firmly grounded with cautious references to the skills required. But Anna can 'do maths' and reckons that Crocodile has enough patience for the two of them. She builds the rocket while Crocodile prepares a picnic and soon they're blasting into space in a whimsical construction that looks more like a playhouse than a rocket. The travellers while away their journey with a sandwich-eating game called *Crocodiles in Space*. And then the moon fills their viewing screen, in all its Clangers-and-tinfoil electron microscope-evoking glory, and the friends head out in spacesuits to bounce around in zero gravity and gaze at the wonders of the earth.

'Do you think it misses us?' asks Anna, in a wistful moment that captures their closeness. By the time they reach home, though, she's as ebullient as ever. 'It was almost impossible!' she cries, as their rocket bursts through her bedroom window. 'But we had the skills!' And readers, too, will feel that anything is possible.

Schwarz's delightful illustrations draw us into Anna's world, which becomes increasingly colourful and chaotic as her imagination takes flight. The friends have a rapport that infuses every spread, and Schwarz's ear for dialogue captures the essence of their partnership. Crocodile is careful and caring, with the commitment to see things through and an eye for detail that Anna lacks.

Anna, of course, supplies the energy, the wild imaginative leaps and the confidence that everything will work out right. Particularly satisfying (and relatively unusual in a picturebook of this type) is the nuanced depiction of their partnership, with all the give-and-take and insight that true friendship requires. Anna respects Crocodile and accepts his advice and leadership. In turn, she enables Crocodile to explore his silly side and discover that he's braver than he thought.

Great fun and with more depth than may at first appear, this book will be enjoyed by children from around 3-6 years and

offers lots of potential for creative exploration and learning through play.

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