

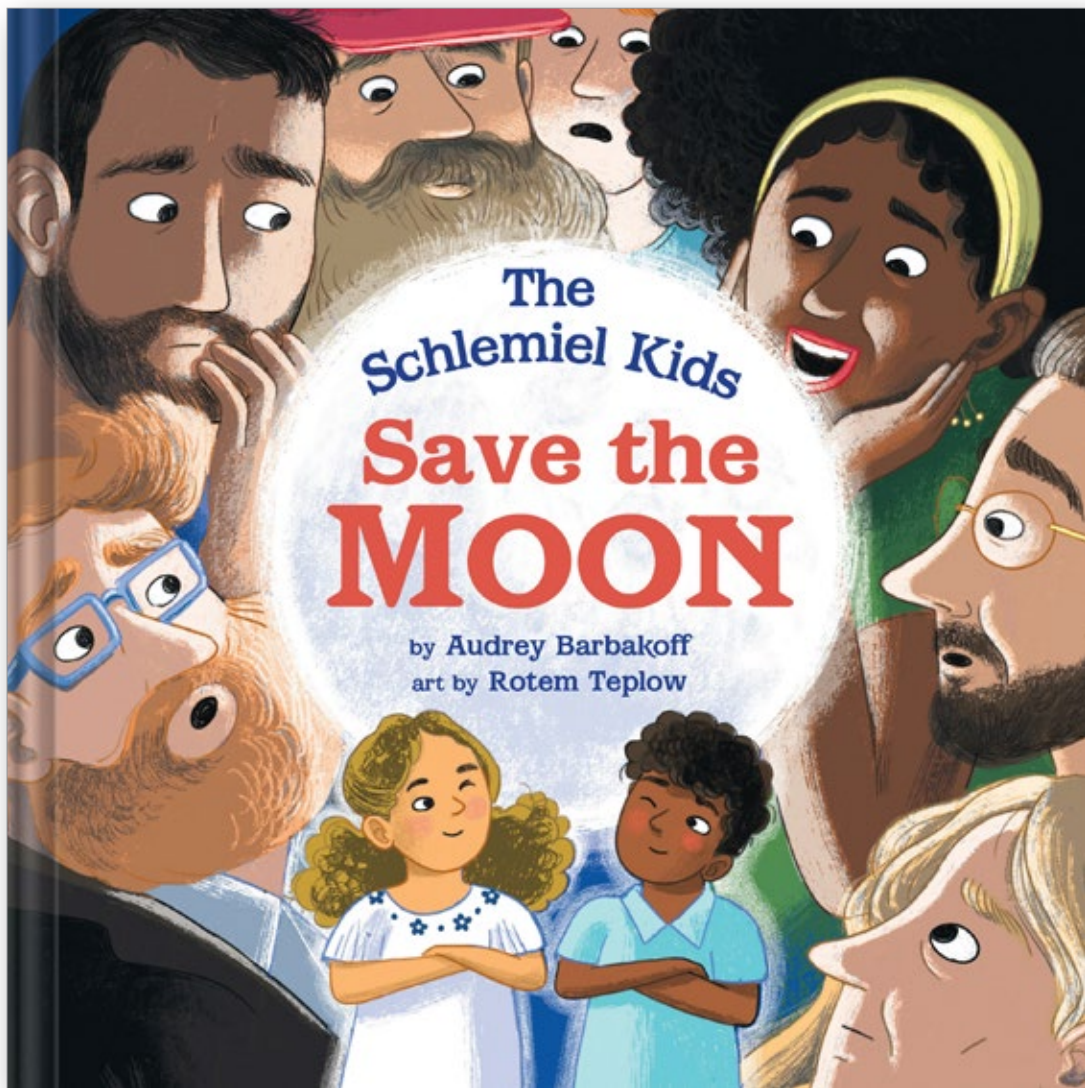


BOOK GUIDE FOR

The Schlemiel Kids Save the Moon

Written by Audrey Barbakoff

Illustrated by Rotem Teplow



Fry Readability: P | Lexile Measure: 550

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Jewish culture has a long tradition of humor. Even in the face of great struggle, Jews have found ways to laugh. Through a silly story like *The Schlemiel Kids Save the Moon*, children of all backgrounds learn to see Jewish identity as multifaceted, joyful, and deserving of celebration. This guide features questions and activities adults can use in the classroom or at home to help kids engage with the book—and have fun!

ABOUT THIS BOOK

When the adults of modern-day Chelm see the full moon reflected in a lake, they become convinced that the moon has fallen out of the sky. They won't let Sam and Sarah Schlemiel explain the truth, so the clever siblings find a way to outsmart their parents into solving their own problem. Kids will laugh along with the silly ways the town's residents try to fish the moon out of the water and love the feeling of understanding more than the grown-ups.

ABOUT CHELM

The town of Chelm, and its foolish “Wise Men,” comes from Eastern European Yiddish folktales. They were popularized in the United States in the 1970s by Issac Bashevis Singer. The updated setting and clever children are a twist introduced by *The Schlemiel Kids Save the Moon*, not part of the original tales.





About the Author

Audrey Barbakoff is a librarian, educator, and entrepreneur. She holds a doctor of education and a master of library and information science. As a Jewish mother, she is passionate about sharing the vibrancy of Jewish humor, languages, and stories with the next generation. Audrey lives with her husband, two children, and chickens on an island in Puget Sound. Though she has written several professional development books for librarians, this is her debut picture book.



About the Illustrator

Rotem Teplow is an Israeli illustrator who lives with her husband and two sons in a small village in Israel, by the dead sea. She loves yoga, reading books, and illustrating beautiful scenery. She graduated from Shenkar College of Design and currently illustrates for newspapers and children books worldwide.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Before Reading

- This story is based on Yiddish folktales, which are traditional stories passed down and retold. What are some folktales that you know? Why do you think we still retell old stories today?
- This is a funny story! What's something that makes you laugh? Do you have a favorite joke?

While Reading

- Why do the adults think the moon has fallen into the lake?
- How do Sam and Sarah trick the adults into realizing the moon is still in the sky?
- See how many times you can find the moon in this book. What are some of the different ways the characters see it?
- How do you think Sam and Sarah feel at the end of the book? Why?

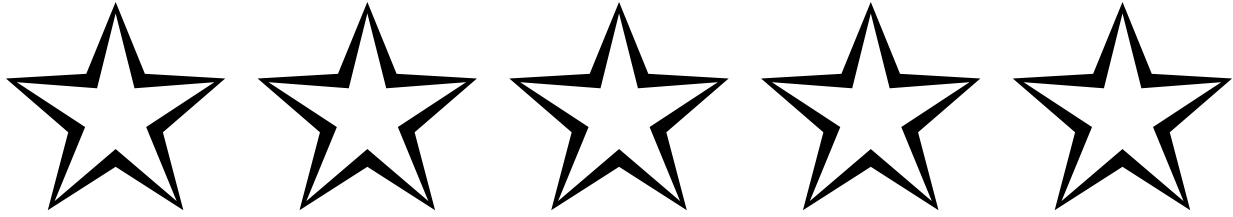
After Reading

- Sam and Sarah knew that the moon hadn't really fallen into the lake, but the adults didn't listen to them. Can you think of a time you knew something, but people around you didn't understand or didn't listen? How did you feel? What did you do?
- What did you think was the funniest part of the story? Think of all the silly ways the grown-ups tried to rescue the moon from the lake. Can you add some funny ideas of your own?



MY BOOK REVIEW

Overall, I would give this book ____ out of 5 stars. (Color in the number of stars)



This book is about:

My favorite part is:

I like that part because:

Something I am wondering about is:

Someone might want to read this book if:

STORY PYRAMID

Educator Tip: Older children can fill this out individually, as a worksheet. For younger children, have a discussion as a class to come up with words together.

Book Title

2 words that describe the setting

3 words that describe the characters

4 words that describe the plot

5 words that describe a theme or main idea

YIDDISH WORD SEARCH

O X T S U R I S O P J W F X C
Z M D M E S H U G G E N E H H
W F E K T K K Z T W S L B G O
N F I G S D O V B A S E U H C
B F R K C V P V E T T K F J H
J W P I H W M I D T O S V J E
E B X N L F A R M I S H T P M
E U O D E O W I U B V K Y V M
S P J E M G O C Z B F A O N O
H K D R I K V E T C H D Q V D
T I P Q E W I M Q Y H J A O C
E S P C L N A R I S H K E I T
T G O R N I S H T Q W C X A P
L E B A Y K G Z G B W L H I P
I O J R S C Z S C H L E P J D

Meshuggeneh	Narishkeit	Schlemiel
Farmisht	Gornisht	Chochem
Bupkis	Kinder	Kvetch
Schlep	Tsuris	Shtetl

MAKE A MOON

In *The Schlemiel Kids Save the Moon*, the moon acts as a character in the story. The moon can look very different depending on the context. Sometimes we see it large and up close; other times it looks far away and small. The adults in Chelm only see its reflection in the water, but you can see it in the sky. When Sam and Sarah look at the moon directly, it even makes a face at them.

What does the moon look like to you? Do you imagine it large or small, realistic or with a silly face? Make and decorate a moon and night sky.

Supplies:

- Tinfoil
- Black Construction Paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- To Decorate: star stickers, markers, and/or paint

Steps:

1. Cut a circle out of tinfoil. It should fit easily onto the construction paper.
2. Crumple up the foil into a ball.
3. Flatten the foil back out. Don't smooth it too much—it should have a crinkled texture, like the moon.
4. Glue your tinfoil moon onto the black construction paper.
5. Decorate your moon and sky. Does your moon have craters or a face? Does the sky have stars, planets, or comets?

