

Goodnight Moon

by Margaret Wise Brown

Classroom Favorites



Teacher's Guide by Kathy Sammis

A Perma-Bound Production

This guide was prepared using the HarperCollins edition, © 1947. Other editions may differ.

SYNOPSIS

This bedtime classic combines Margaret Wise Brown's simple, softly rhythmic text with Clement Hurd's brightly colored, detailed illustrations that gradually become darker as the book lulls its young listeners into drowsy readiness for sleep. The entire book shows, innovatively for its time, a single setting: a young child-rabbit's "great green" bedroom. We alternate between two-page full-color spreads filled with homey objects and details, followed by two 1-page black-on-white line drawings focusing on single details in the bedroom. The two-page spreads are initially bright with bold, vivid colors. As the text moves along, the colors darken as nighttime envelops the bedroom, while the night sky outside the bedroom windows gradually brightens as the moon rises.

As the text opens, the little bunny is sitting up in bed in his pajamas; it is 7 p.m., and the bedtime ritual is beginning. The author-narrator names objects in the room—"There was a telephone/And a red balloon/And a picture of—" — prompting young readers/listeners to name the many objects not specified in the text. Brown and Hurd mix fantasy with the otherwise very realistic text and art via the pictures on the bedroom wall, which show nursery-rhyme and fairy-tale subjects; the picture on the far wall is from another Brown-Hurd book, *The Runaway Bunny*. In another piece of whimsy, the book on the bunny's beside table is...*Goodnight Moon*.

The second color spread shows more of the bedroom, again naming some of its objects. The little white mouse from the first color page reappears, and readers/listeners will delight in finding the mouse in a new location in each subsequent color spread. The third color spread expands to show us the entire bedroom, appearing very like a stage setting. An "old lady" bunny has appeared in the rocking chair with her knitting. The bright colors, familiar objects, and warm glow from lights and the hearthside fire create a cozy, warm, secure feeling. The time has progressed to 7:20 p.m., and we can just see a bit of the moon beginning to rise outside one of the bedroom windows. On this spread, the child-bunny (and child-reader/listener) begins to say goodnight to each of the familiar, comforting things in the room. "Goodnight room" the bunny says, and on each of the next twenty pages, he/she says goodnight to a succession of other items—moon, light, red balloon, bears and chairs, kittens and mittens, clocks and socks, and so on.

As the lulling, rhythmic text goes on, the colors in the bed-

room gradually darken, creating a mesmerizing falling-asleep effect. This effect is startlingly interrupted on one otherwise blank black-and-white page when the bunny/narrator says, "Goodnight nobody," but the following pages return to the rhythmic, visually detailed recitation pattern. (Margaret Wise Brown said one of her aims in writing was to "jog the reader with the unexpected and comfort him with the familiar.")

In the final two-page spread, the colors and objects in the bedroom are extremely muted. Outside the windows, the full moon and the stars shine brightly white in a bright blue sky, watched by the little mouse on the windowsill. "Goodnight noises everywhere," the text concludes. Our little bunny is sound asleep in bed, and bedtime readers/listeners are probably ready to fall asleep now, too.

TIME LINE

- 7 p.m. Bedtime begins.
- 7:10 p.m. We see the other end of the bedroom.
- 7:20 p.m. Moon begins to rise; room begins to darken.
- 7:30 p.m. Bunny says goodnight to the bears and chairs; room continues to darken.
- 7:40 p.m. Bunny says goodnight to clocks and socks; room is darker.
- 7:50 p.m. Bunny says goodnight to comb and brush; room is darker still.
- 8:00 p.m. Bunny says goodnight to the old lady; room is again darker.
- 8:10 p.m. Room is very dark; bunny is asleep.

AUTHOR SKETCH

Margaret Wise Brown pioneered the writing of preschool stories rooted in the here-and-now real world of very young children. She was one of a group of writers initially associated with the Bank Street College in New York City who studied child development and observed children at Bank Street's progressive nursery school. Brown and her colleagues concluded that nursery-age and younger children wanted and needed books that focused on helping them recognize and deal with the world they experienced in their everyday lives, rather than books of fantasy and fairy tale exclusively. While this is an accepted concept now, in Brown's time this was a startling innovation; many librarians rejected here-and-now books, but young readers/listeners and their parents embraced this approach eagerly.

Brown was astonishingly prolific. In her brief career, from 1937 to her death in 1952, she published approximately 100 picture books with seven different publishers, a number of which are considered classics, like *Goodnight Moon*. Brown was an

outwardly mirthful free spirit filled with inner self-doubt; a collaborator who often brought out the best in her illustrators; a beautiful young woman who used her own ability to respond to life in a childlike way to reach her young readers/listeners with great empathy.

Brown was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1910. She grew up on Long Island with her two siblings, developing into the dreamer, storyteller, and mischief-maker of the trio. After graduating from Hollins College in Virginia in 1932, Brown went to New York with vague plans to become a writer. She found her vocation when she joined the Writers Laboratory at Bank Street. In 1938, she became editor at the newly launched William R. Scott publishing house, established to put out well-written, well-illustrated, innovative books for the very young, an audience at that time largely ignored by book publishers. At the same time, Brown began publishing her own writings, often illustrated by innovative and (later) celebrated artists such as Clement Hurd, Leonard Weisgard, and Jean Charlot. She produced books at a prodigious rate and worked closely with her illustrators to achieve the exact effect she had in mind.

Brown divided her time among three homes—an apartment in New York City, a tiny wooden house hidden away in New York's Upper East Side, and a home on Vinalhaven island, Maine—and traveled frequently. Her personal life was marred by a difficult, often rancorous ten-year relationship with the much-older (female) socialite Michael Strange, but in 1952 she fell in love with and became engaged to the much-younger James "Pebble" Rockefeller. On a trip to France before the planned marriage, Brown underwent routine emergency surgery. While recuperating in the hospital in Nice, she died suddenly on November 13 when a blood clot traveled to her brain, which put an abrupt end to an astonishing career. She left many unpublished manuscripts, some of which have been, and continue to be, published posthumously.

ILLUSTRATOR SKETCH

Clement Hurd was a frequent collaborator with Margaret Wise Brown. He and his wife, author Edith Thacher Hurd, were good friends of Brown's and closely associated with the new here-and-now revolution in very young children's literature, creating more than 75 of these books with Clem as illustrator and Edith as writer. Clement Hurd was born in New York City in 1908, growing up there while spending summers at the New Jersey shore. He began drawing and painting at boarding school when he was 13. After graduating from Yale University in 1930, he studied at the Yale School of Architecture for one year. He then studied painting in Paris under Fernand Léger, which inspired his use of bold, flat colors and shapes. Family finances as the Great Depression continued forced Hurd to return to New York, where he worked as a freelance artist and designer. There, examples of his work caught the eye of Brown, who asked him to illustrate one of her books. The Brown-Hurd collaboration was highly successful and resulted in a total of eight joint books, including the classic *Runaway Bunny* and *Goodnight Moon*. Hurd also joined the Writers Laboratory at Bank Street, where he and Edith met; they married in 1939.

During World War II, Clem served in the army, painting camouflage in the South Pacific, while Edith lived in San Francisco. After the war, the couple lived in their old farmhouse in rural Vermont. Son Thacher was born in 1949; when he reached school age, the Hurds relocated to the San Francisco area, living

on 130 acres on the side of Mt. Tamalpais. During the 1960s, Clem experimented with various media, including prints that combined linoleum cuts, weathered boards, and bits of plants. For Edith's "I Can Read" books, Clem employed loose, expressive line drawings. He died in San Francisco in 1988 at the age of 80 after being ill with Alzheimer's disease for several years. Gale Research has reported that Hurd's favorites among the works he illustrated were *The Runaway Bunny*, *Goodnight Moon*, *Christmas Eve*, *Wingfin and Topple*, *Wildfire*, *The So-So Cat*, and *The Day the Sun Danced*.

CRITICS' CORNER

Margaret Wise Brown is widely admired for both the quality of her published books and her effective efforts to redirect children's literature into innovative, creative new channels. Critics, and parents, admire her empathetic ability to speak to children's needs for security, love, independence, and finding their place in the world. Brown achieves this through simple and direct language, humor, unexpected narrative "jogs," childlike humor, comfortable repetition, and cadenced rhythm. The artwork for her books—as with Hurd's inviting illustrations for *Goodnight Moon*—relies less on realism than on bold graphics with expressive use of color, creating a vibrancy designed to appeal to the young child's intense sensory enjoyment.

Among Brown's classics are *The Runaway Bunny*, *Goodnight Moon*, the *Noisy Book* series, and *The Little Fur Family*. *Goodnight Moon* has enchanted and lulled generations of children since its first appearance in 1947. Critics cite the atmosphere of peace and calm the book creates, as "the sound of the words, the ideas they convey, and the pictures combine to lull and reassure when bedtime and darkness come" (*The New York Times Book Review*). *The Christian Science Monitor* praised this book as an "ideal bedtime book with its rhythm, its atmosphere of cozy security, its poetry and childlike imagination." *The New York Herald Tribune* critic testified to the book's effectiveness, remarking that the "softly repeating, rhyming text" together with the pictures create "together an atmosphere of going to sleep so contagious that the eyelids of a reviewer may begin to droop if he is writing on a warm day." *Goodnight Moon* has sold more than 2 million copies since 1947 and has never been out of print.

BOOKS BY MARGARET WISE BROWN AND CLEMENT HURD

Bumble Bugs and Elephants (1938)
The Runaway Bunny (1941)
Goodnight Moon (1947)
The Bad Little Duckhunter (1947)
My World (1949)
The Peppermint Family (1950)
The Little Brass Band (1955)
The Diggers (1961)
The Pop Up Goodnight Moon Room (1982)

SELECTED OTHER BOOKS BY MARGARET WISE BROWN

Illustrated by Leonard Weisgard
Noisy Book and sequels (1939 and later)
Night and Day (1942)
The Golden Egg Book (1947)
The Important Book (1949)
The Noon Balloon (1952)

Illustrated by Weisgard, under Brown pseudonym Golden McDonald

Red Light, Green Light (1944)

Little Lost Lamb (1945)

The Little Island (1946)

Illustrated by Garth Williams

Little Fur Family (1946)

Wait Till the Moon Is Full (1948)

Mister Dog: The Dog Who Belonged to Himself (1952)

The Sailor Dog (1953)

With Edith Thacher Hurd, under joint pseudonym Juniper Sage

The Man in the Manhole and the Fix-It Men (1946)

Five Little Firemen (1948)

Other

When the Wind Blew, illustrated by Rosalie Slocum (1937)

The Fish with the Deep Sea Smile, illustrated by Roberta Rauch (1938)

The Little Fireman, illustrated by Esphyr Slobodkina (1938)

A Child's Good Night Book, illustrated by Jean Charlot (1943)

SHHhhh...Bang: A Whispering Book (1943)

The House of a Hundred Windows, illustrated by Robert de Veyrac (1945)

The Sleepy Little Lion, illustrated by Ylla (1947)

Two Little Trains, illustrated by Jean Charlot (1949)

The Color Kittens, illustrated by A. and M. Provensen (1949)

The Hidden House, illustrated by Aaron Fine (1953)

The Little Fir Tree, illustrated by Barbara Cooney (1954)

Wheel on the Chimney, illustrated by Tibor Gergely (1954)

The Dead Bird, illustrated by Remy Charlip (1958)

On Christmas Eve, illustrated by Beni Montresor (1961)

Four Fur Feet, illustrated by Remy Charlip (1961)

Once Upon a Time in a Pigpen and Three Other Margaret Wise Brown Books, illustrated by Ann Strugnell (1980)

Walt Disney stories retold (1994-96)

SELECTED OTHER BOOKS BY CLEMENT HURD

As Writer-Illustrator

Town (1939)

Country (1939)

As Illustrator

The World Is Round, by Gertrude Stein (1939)

Monkey in the Jungle, by Edna Mitchell Preston (1968)

As Illustrator, all written by Edith Thacher Hurd

"I Can Read" series

Benny, the Bulldozer (1947)

The Cat from Telegraph Hill (1955)

Mr. Charlie's Chicken House and sequels (1955 and later)

Christmas Eve (1962)

No Funny Business (1962)

Johnny Lion series (1965 and later)

The So-So Cat (1965)

Little Dog, Dreaming, co-authored by Thacher Hurd (1967)

Catfish (1970)

The Mother Beaver and "Mother Animal" sequels (1971 and later)

Under the Lemon Tree (1980)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

For Goodnight Moon

Booklist, Oct. 15, 1947, p. 74.

Christian Science Monitor, Sept. 30, 1947, p. 12.

Kirkus Reviews, July 1, 1947, p. 334.

Library Journal, September 15, 1947, p. 1277.

Marcus, Leonard, *The Making of Goodnight Moon: A 50th Anniversary Retrospective*. HarperCollins Publishers, 1997.

———, "A Moon That Never Sets," *New York Times Book Review*, Jan. 25, 1987, p. 22.

New Yorker, Dec. 6, 1947, p. 140.

New York Herald Tribune Weekly Book Review, Oct. 26, 1947, p. 10.

New York Times Book Review, Sept. 7, 1947, p. 35.

Saturday Review of Literature, Nov. 15, 1947, p. 40.

School Library Journal, May 1979, pp. 38-39.

Internet sites for Goodnight Moon

"Children's Book Page: Goodnight Writers Everywhere":

<www.bookpage.com/9707bp/childrens/goodnightmoon.html>

"Goodnight Moon 50th Anniversary Archive":

<www.harperchildrens.com/features/goodnightmoon.htm>

"Goodnight Moon Reviews": <www.epinions.com/book_mu-2013736>

"Parents' Picks: Goodnight Moon":

<www.parentcenter.com/community/ppt/picks/learning/reading/reluctantReaders/goodnightMoon2-4/?CP_bid=>>

For Margaret Wise Brown

Bader, Barbara. *American Picturebooks from Noah's Ark to the Beast Within*. NY: Macmillan, 1976.

Bechtel, Louise Seaman, "Margaret Wise Brown, 'Laureate of the Nursery'," *Horn Book*, June 1958, pp. 172-86.

Berger, Laura Standley, ed. *Twentieth-Century Children's Writers*, 4th ed. Detroit/London: St. James Press, 1995.

Bliven, Bruce, Jr., "Child's Best Seller," *Life Magazine*, Dec. 2, 1946, pp. 59-66.

Brown, Margaret Wise. *The Days Before Now: An Autobiographical Note*. Adapted by Joan W. Blos. NY: Simon & Schuster, 1994.

Children's Literature Review, Vol. 10. Detroit: Gale, 1986.

Contemporary Authors, New Revision Series, Vol. 78. Detroit: Gale, 1999.

Dictionary of Literary Biography, Vol. 22. Detroit: Gale, 1983.

Estes, Angela M., "Margaret Wise Brown: Awakened by You Know Who," *Children's Literature*, Vol. 22, 1994, pp. 162-70.

Fleischman, John, "Shakespeare of the Sandbox Set," *Parents*, July 1988, pp. 92-96.

Greene, Carol. *Margaret Wise Brown: Author of Goodnight Moon*. Chicago: Children's Press, 1993.

Hearn, Michael Patrick, "Margaret Wise Brown: Comforts of the Familiar," *Book World—The Washington Post*, Nov. 11, 1979, p. 16.

Hurd, Clement, "Remembering Margaret Wise Brown," *Horn Book*, October 1983, pp. 553-60.

Marcus, Leonard, "Awakened by the Moon," *Publishers Weekly*, July 26, 1991, pp. 16-20.

———, "Getting a Life: Writing Margaret Wise Brown's Biography," *Horn Book*, November/December 1999, pp. 705ff.

———, "The Legend of Margaret Wise Brown," *Publishers Weekly*, July 22, 1983, pp. 74-76

———. *Margaret Wise Brown: Awakened by the Moon*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1992.

- The New York Times* (obituary), Nov. 15, 1952, p. 17.
- Pichey, Martha, "Bunny Dearest," *Vanity Fair*, December 2000, pp. 172-87.
- Publishers Weekly* (obituary), November 22, 1952, p. 2093.
- Rivinus, Timothy M., "The Psychological Genius of Margaret Wise Brown," *Children's Literature in Education*, March 1992, pp. 1-14.
- Rylant, Cynthia. *Margaret, Frank, and Andy: Three Writers' Stories*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1996.
- Silvey, Anita, ed. *Children's Books and Their Creators*. Boston/NY: Houghton Mifflin, 1995.
- Something About the Author*, Vol. 100. Detroit: Gale, 1999.
- Wilson, John, "Margaret Wise Brown," *Magill Book Reviews* on-line, #9306168054.

Internet sites for Margaret Wise Brown:

- "About the Author: Margaret Wise Brown":
<www.harperchildrens.com/features/mwb.htm>
- "Margaret Wise Brown": <www.edupaperback.org/authorbios/Brown_MargaretWise.html>
- "Margaret Wise Brown": <www.margaretwisebrown.com/>
- "Margaret Wise Brown by Leonard S. Marcus":
<hallbook.com/childrens_books/16.shtml>
- "The Unofficial Margaret Wise Brown Web Site":
<persweb.direct.ca/ikhan/wisebrown/>

For Clement Hurd

- Children's Literature Review*, Vol. 47. Detroit: Gale Research, 1998.
- "Clement Hurd: Children's Book Illustrator as Artist and Exhibitor," *Publishers Weekly*, Feb. 7, 1966, pp. 106-108.
- Contemporary Authors, New Revision Series*. Vol. 24. Detroit: Gale, 1988.
- Fuller, Muriel, ed. *More Junior Authors*. New York: H.W. Wilson, 1963.
- Kelley, Barbara, "A Writer, an Illustrator, and a Peaceable Kingdom," *Christian Science Monitor*, Dec. 10, 1984.
- Kingman, Lee, et al. *Illustrators of Children's Books: 1957-1966 and 1967-1976*. Boston: Horn Book, 1968, 1978
- The New York Times* (obituary), Feb. 10, 1988, p. B6.
- Nordstrom, Ursula, and Thacher Hurd, "Clement Hurd 1908-1988," *Publishers Weekly*, Feb. 26, 1988, pp. 123-24.
- Silvey, Anita, ed. *Children's Books and Their Creators*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995.
- Something About the Author*, Vols. 64. Detroit: Gale, 1991.
- Something About the Author Autobiography Series*, Vol. 13. Detroit: Gale, 1992.

Internet sites for Clement Hurd

- "About the Illustrator: Clement Hurd":
<www.harperchildrens.com/features/ch.htm>
- "Beginnings by Thacher Hurd": <www.pkpress.com/start.html>

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To use discussion questions to recall details, interpret characters and events, read or listen critically, and respond creatively to the story and its illustrations
2. To expand vocabulary through context clues and word study
3. To expand responses to the book by completing a variety of related activities, some in other areas of the curriculum
4. To exercise artistic, craft, and dramatic skills to help interpret reading

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To identify mood and feelings created by the book's words and pictures
2. To note changes that occur in the "great green room" in the course of the novel
3. To recognize rhyming words named in the text
4. To recognize primary and secondary colors most used in the illustrations
5. To follow the passage of time during the book as shown by the bedroom clocks
6. To find the mouse in each of the book's color pictures
7. To note pictures in which the old lady bunny and the kittens do and do not appear
8. To identify in the pictures the things that the little bunny says goodnight to, and to name other things shown in the pictures to which the little bunny does not say goodnight

SETTINGS

The book uses a single setting: the "great green room" that is the bunny-child's bedroom. While this is a single room, the setting is not static. The two-page alternating color and black-and-white segments move from a stage-setting-like overview of the room to single, up-close details of particular things in the room. The view of the room itself shifts, from right side of the room, to middle and left side, to full view, then to changing partial views. The little mouse keeps moving around, drawing readers/listeners to different areas of the room.

The old lady is absent, present, absent from the rocking chair. The little bunny stays in bed but shifts position and focus in each picture. The kittens' activities change. The moon is at first absent but then appears partially, and it gradually moves up in the sky as seen through the window. As the evening goes on, the green room itself gradually changes from its bright, bold intensity of color to a muted, darkening, nighttime state. At the same time, the moon and stars and the night sky become brighter and lighter as seen through the windows.

CROSS-CURRICULAR SOURCES

Books About Getting Ready for Bed

- Kate Banks, *And If the Moon Could Talk*
- Beverly Cleary, *Petey's Bedtime Story*
- Jane Dyer, *Animal Crackers: A Delectable Collection of Pictures, Poems, and Lullabies for the Very Young*
- Jonathan London, *Froggy Goes to Bed*
- Karen Ray, *Sleep Song*
- Cynthia Rylant, *Night in the Country*
- Dr. Seuss, *Dr. Seuss' Sleep Book*

Books About Night Fears

- Ed Emberly, *Go Away, Big Green Monster!*
- James Howe, *There's a Monster Under My Bed*
- Mercer Mayer, *There's an Alligator Under My Bed*
- James Stevenson, *What's Under My Bed?*
- Martin Waddell, *Can't You Sleep, Little Bear?*

Books About Animals at Night

- Merry Banks, *Animals of the Night*
- Rebecca Dotlich, *Sweet Dreams of the Wild: Poems for Bedtime*
- Mem Fox, *Time for Bed*
- Howard Goldsmith, *Sleepy Little Owl*
- Pat Hutchins, *Good-Night, Owl!*
- Kate McMullan, *If You Were My Bunny*

Peggy Rathmann, *Good Night, Gorilla*
Susan Stockdale, *Some Sleep Standing Up*
Jenny Tyers, *When It Is Night, When It Is Day*

Moon and Night-Sky Stories

Frank Asch, *Happy Birthday Moon*
Eric Carle, *Draw Me a Star* and *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me*

Tim Chadwick, *Cabbage Moon*
Lenny Hort, *How Many Stars in the Sky?*

Anne Miranda, *Night Songs*

Toby Speed, *Two Cool Cows*

Dan Yaccarino, *Zoom Zoom Zoom I'm Off to the Moon*

Books About the Moon and Stars

Isaac Asimov, *Why Does the Moon Change Shape?*

Jennifer Dussling, *Stars*

Allan Fowler, *So That's How the Moon Changes Shape!*

Gail Gibbons, *Stargazers*

Patrick Moore, *The Sun and the Moon*

Mother Goose Stories and Nursery Rhymes

Marilyn Janovitz, *Hey Diddle Diddle*

Mother Goose, many editions

Iza Trapani, *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*

CD-ROM

Blue's Reading Time Activities and *Blue's Treasure Hunt*
(Humongus Entertainment)

Jumpstart Artist (Knowledge Adventure)

The Magic School Bus Explores the Solar System (Microsoft)

Reading Blaster: Ages 4-6 and *Reading Blaster: Ages 5-7*
(Knowledge Adventure)

Game

Goodnight Moon Game

Internet for Students

"Do Not Disturb: A Closer Look at Animals at Rest":

<puddler.org/puddler/teachersguide/winterteachersguide/winsftxt/html>

Goodnight Moon—a page from the book to print out and color:

<www.harperchildrens.com/features/gnmcp.htm>

"Kids' Adventures in Space: The Moon":

<www.stargazers.freeserve.co.uk/Moonpage.htm>

"Margaret Wise Brown Photos":

<www.margaretwisebrown.com/photoalbum.htm>

"Margaret Wise Brown Short Bio":

<www.margaretwisebrown.com/biography3.htm>

"The Moon: Earth's Satellite":

<starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/solar_system_level1/moon.html>

"Sleep from A to Zzz: Animals":

<library.thinkquest.org/25553/english/animals/index.shtml?type=regular>

"Star Child: A Learning Center for Young Astronomers":

<starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/StarChild.html>

Internet for Teachers

"Space Unit": <www.geocities.com/melissashomepage/units/space_unit.htm>

"Star Stuff Kindergarten": <www.kidsspace.com/>

"Universe in Motion: Kindergarten Unit—Our Solar System":

<marple.as.utexas.edu/~ideaskinder.html>

Sound Recordings

The Floppy Sleep Game (Dream Flight Productions)

Goodnight Moon (Live Oak Media)

Videos

All About the Moon (Schlesinger Media/Library Video Co.)

And If the Moon Could Talk (Spoken Arts)

Baby Songs Good Night (Backyard Enterprises)

The Big Comfy Couch (Big Comfy Corp./Goldhill Home Media)

Goodnight Baby, Baby Goodnight (Company Partners/Big Kid Prods.)

Good Night, Gorilla (Weston Woods)

Goodnight Moon and Other Sleepytime Tales

Maurice Sendak's Little Bear: Goodnight Little Bear
(Paramount Pictures)

Nighty Night (Peter Pan Entertainment)

Sky Above: A First Look (Cochran Communications/Rainbow Educational Media)

THEMES AND MOTIFS

In discussing the book, help students understand that the story deals with these main issues and situations.

Themes

- bedtime and goodnights
- comfort and security
- naming of familiar things
- establishment of a peaceful, lulling atmosphere
- rhythm, rhyme, and repetition

Motifs

- the rising moon and the night sky
- the mouse
- bunnies
- playful kittens
- stories suggested by hanging pictures

MEANING STUDY

Discuss with students the meaning of these phrases from the story.

1. The cow jumping over the moon
(*One of the pictures on the bedroom wall shows the cow jumping over the moon, a scene from the nursery rhyme "Hey Diddle Diddle." You could have members of the class recite this rhyme together.*)
2. three little bears sitting on chairs
(*This is another scene in another one of the pictures on the bedroom wall. It suggests the story "Goldilocks and the Three Bears," which you could invite students to share with classmates.*)
3. a pair of mittens
(*Review with students that a pair is a set of two things made to be used together. In cold climates, children and adults keep their hands warm outdoors by wearing a mitten on each hand.*)
4. a bowl full of mush
(*Mush is meal cooked in water or milk until it forms a soft, thick mass. The little bunny's mush is probably oatmeal, a soothing bedtime snack or supper.*)
5. "hush"
(*The old lady bunny whispers "hush," or "be quiet," adding to the atmosphere of calm and quiet that will help lull the little bunny to sleep.*)
6. comb and brush
(*The little bunny has these on the table near his bed, so he can groom his fur before bedtime, just as students comb and brush their hair when getting ready for bed.*)

COMPREHENSION/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Discuss the following questions with your students. You could ask students in higher grades to write their answers to the questions in their own words.

1. Look at the pictures in the book, without reading the story. Write or tell a few sentences about one or more of the pictures. Describe 1) what the bunny (or bunnies) in the picture is (are) feeling or doing at that moment and 2) what is happening in the picture and 3) what is important in this particular picture. As you read or listen to the story, see if what you wrote or told about the picture(s) was accurate.
2. What feeling do you get from the first three "great green room" pictures?
(Answers will vary somewhat. The bright, clear colors make the room seem cheerful and inviting. The warm glow of the lamp, the fire, and the toy house's windows creates a cozy feeling. The familiar everyday objects all through the room provide a sense of comfort and hominess. The overall scene is cozy, comfortable, and inviting.)
3. How do the "great green room" pictures change from the beginning through the end of the book?
(As the evening goes on, the colors get darker and muted, while the night sky becomes brighter and lighter outside the windows. The moon is at first not seen, and then moves up in the sky gradually. The view of the room shifts from right side, to middle and left side, to full view, then to changing partial views. The little mouse is in a different place in the room in each picture. The kittens' activities change. The old lady is absent, present, absent from the rocking chair. The little bunny stays in bed but shifts position and focus in each picture.)
4. What feeling do you get from the last "great green room" picture?
(Answers will vary somewhat. The overall atmosphere is one of dark quiet, with all daytime activities ended and sleep descending on everything and everyone in the room, except for toy house's lights and the little mouse.)
5. What colors do you see the most in the third great green room picture? What other important colors do you notice?
(The predominant colors are green—mainly in the walls—and red—mainly the floor. Shades of yellow and blue appear throughout and help unite the scene.)
6. What book does the little bunny have on her/his bedside table?
(The book is Goodnight Moon!)
7. Look at the clocks in the room. How do they change as the book goes from beginning to ending?
(The clocks change in ten-minute intervals, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:10 p.m.)
8. Tell where the mouse is in each picture of the "great green room."
(Readers/listeners love to find the little mouse in each picture. The mouse is first right alongside the fireside wood basket, then a bit farther away from the basket. In the fourth "great green room" picture, the mouse is on the clothes drying rack. Next, the mouse is on the bookcase, then in front of the fireplace, and then on the table peering into the bowl of mush. In the last picture, the mouse is on the windowsill looking out at the bright, starry, moonlit night sky.)

9. What are the kittens doing in each picture? Which color pictures of the bedroom do *not* show the kittens?
(We don't see the kittens in the first color picture. In the second color picture, the kittens are on the rug. Then they are playing with the old lady's knitting yarn in the third and fifth pictures, but are not in the fourth or sixth color pictures. They are looking at the old lady in the seventh color picture and are curled up to sleep in the rocking chair in the last picture.)
10. What surprise, if any, do you notice in the pages that say goodnight to things?
(In the middle of the string of page-by-page "goodnights" to things in the bedroom, the little bunny/narrator suddenly says, "Goodnight nobody" on a page that's otherwise blank. Margaret Wise Brown liked to jog her readers/listeners with an unexpected surprise in the course of her text.)

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Invite students to complete any of these activities that are suitable for their grade and interest level.

Language Arts

1. Read or listen to *The Runaway Bunny*. How is *Bunny* like *Moon*? What part of *Bunny* is illustrated in *Moon*?
2. Talk with classmates about other favorite bedtime stories/books. What are your favorites? What appeals to you about these bedtime books?
3. Retell in your own words the story of the cow jumping over the moon or of three bears with chairs.
4. Identify the rhyming words in *Goodnight Moon*.
5. Rhyme objects you see in your classroom.
6. With classmates, rewrite the text of this book as one line-by-line poem, on a poster or in a scroll.

Science

1. Find out how and why the moon moves in different shapes through our night sky.
2. Find some star constellations in the night sky, and tell the story of one of them.
3. Explain why we don't see the moon and stars in the sky during the day.
4. What makes a balloon float up in the sky or on the ceiling of a room? Work with classmates to find the answer to this question.
5. With classmates, create a "field guide" to the common mouse you might find in your house.
6. Find out what different animals do at night. Tell how several different animals sleep at night. Or report on the activities of some animals that sleep during the day and are active at night.

Art

1. Create an artwork that shows your bedroom, or other room in your home, using bright, bold colors.
2. Create a simple line drawing that expresses a basic part of one of your favorite fairy tales or nursery rhymes.
3. Make a moon-and-stars mobile.

Mathematics

1. The book mentions a "pair" of mittens. What other words do you know that describe groups of more than one thing? How many things does each of these words mean?
2. How many objects are named in the first part of this book

[teacher: the pages through “And a quiet old lady who was whispering ‘hush’”]?

3. How many objects does the bunny child/narrator say “good-night” to in the second part of this book?
4. How many pictures do the kittens appear in? How many pictures does the mouse appear in? How many pictures does the old lady bunny appear in?

Music

1. Share with classmates favorite lullabies. Why do you think these songs help people to go to sleep?
2. With classmates, sing the song “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star,” including the second verse. Then talk about the words to the song and what they mean.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

1. Tell what other things you will say goodnight to in the “goodnight” pages.
2. Name some things in the first two “great green room” pictures that are not mentioned in the text.
3. Identify things in the “great green room” pictures that are in your bedroom and/or other rooms in your home.
4. Describe your own bedtime routine. Is it like your classmates’ bedroom routines? Is it like the bedtime routine in this book?
5. What kinds of activities do you do during the day? What kinds of things do you do at night? How do you and other members of your family know when it is time to go to bed?
6. Explain what element of fire safety is NOT followed from what you see in this book’s illustrations.
7. Ask someone you know—maybe a grandmother—to come to class and demonstrate the craft of knitting and show some hand-knitted garments.
8. With classmates, make a meal of breakfast (or bedtime) oatmeal, or another kind of “mush.”
9. With classmates, create a list of “how-to” guidelines for caring for a pet kitten.

ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

Depending on student ability level, you could have students write their responses to one of these assessment vehicles or simply discuss their response with you, individually or in a group setting.

1. Explain what the color pictures add to this story, or how the pictures fill out the story’s words.
2. Identify the various rhyming (and repeated) words in the book, and make up some rhyming word pairs of your own.
3. Explain the ways in which the moon plays a part in this book.
4. From what the pictures and words show and tell, describe the little bunny’s life, home, and family.

VOCABULARY TEST

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. b | 4. a |
| 2. a | 5. b |
| 3. c | |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (10 points)

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. c | 4. b |
| 2. e | 5. a |
| 3. d | |

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. b | 6. c |
| 2. a | 7. b |
| 3. c | 8. a |
| 4. b | 9. b |
| 5. a | 10. c |

Part III: True/False (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. T |
| 2. F | 7. F |
| 3. T | 8. T |
| 4. F | 9. T |
| 5. T | 10. F |

Part IV: Essay (Extra Credit)

Answers will vary.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (10 Points)

- | | |
|------|------|
| 1. c | 4. e |
| 2. d | 5. b |
| 3. a | |

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. a | 6. b |
| 2. c | 7. c |
| 3. b | 8. b |
| 4. a | 9. a |
| 5. c | 10. c |

Part III: True/False (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. T |
| 2. F | 7. F |
| 3. T | 8. T |
| 4. F | 9. T |
| 5. F | 10. F |

Part IV: Essay (Extra Credit)

Answers will vary.

VOCABULARY TEST

Read each sentence. Below the sentence, find the answer that could be used in place of the word in boldface (dark) type. Write the letter of the answer in the blank in front of the sentence.

_____ 1. In the **great** green room there was a telephone....

- (a) broken
- (b) very big
- (c) quiet.

_____ 2. ...And a **young** mouse.

- (a) in the early part of life
- (b) tired
- (c) old

_____ 3. The cow **jumping** over the moon...

- (a) kicking
- (b) swimming
- (c) leaping in the air

_____ 4. And a quiet old lady who was **whispering** "hush."

- (a) speaking very softly
- (b) shouting
- (c) singing clearly

_____ 5. Goodnight **noises** everywhere.

- (a) night animals
- (b) sounds
- (c) dreams

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Matching (10 points)

Read each description. Find the name on the right that matches the description. Write the letter of the name in the space in front of the description.

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| _____ 1. Animal in a picture on the wall, sitting in a chair. | a. old lady bunny |
| _____ 2. Animal that plays with yarn. | b. white mouse |
| _____ 3. Animal in bed in striped pajamas. | c. bear |
| _____ 4. Animal who moves all around the bedroom. | d. young bunny |
| _____ 5. Animal who is not in the room at the beginning and the end of the book. | e. kitten |

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write the letter of the ending you chose in the space in front of each sentence.

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| _____ 1. On the ceiling of the great green room is a | (a) white mouse. | (b) red balloon. | (c) little brown bird. |
| _____ 2. The floor of the bunny's bedroom is | (a) red. | (b) blue. | (c) green. |
| _____ 3. At the end of the book, lights are still on | (a) on the bedside table. | (b) on the bookcase. | (c) in the toy house. |
| _____ 4. These items are hanging up to dry in the great green room: | (a) shorts and shirts. | (b) socks and mittens. | (c) hats and slippers. |
| _____ 5. The old lady bunny sits in/on a | (a) rocking chair. | (b) soft armchair. | (c) sofa. |
| _____ 6. On the young bunny's bedside table is a | (a) water glass. | (b) pair of slippers. | (c) telephone. |
| _____ 7. The bunny rhymes when he says goodnight to | (a) moon and stars. | (b) mittens and kittens. | (c) mush and mouse. |
| _____ 8. The bunny falls asleep around | (a) 8 o'clock. | (b) 7 o'clock. | (c) 6 o'clock. |
| _____ 9. On a page with no picture, the little bunny says goodnight to | (a) the old lady. | (b) nobody. | (c) the moon. |
| _____ 10. One of the pictures on the bedroom wall shows | (a) a cat with a fiddle. | (b) the Velveteen Rabbit. | (c) a mother and a child bunny. |

Part III: True/False (20 points)

Mark each sentence with a **T** if it is true or an **F** if any part of it is false.

- _____ 1. The author of this book also painted the book's pictures.
- _____ 2. You can see the moon through the window on each color page in the book.
- _____ 3. There are two clocks in the bunny's bedroom.
- _____ 4. The little bunny says goodnight to his parents during the story.
- _____ 5. The mouse looks into the little bunny's bowl of mush.
- _____ 6. The little bunny moves around but does not get out of bed during the story.
- _____ 7. The kittens chase the mouse around the bedroom.
- _____ 8. There are several rugs on the floor of the bunny's bedroom.
- _____ 9. One of the bunny's bedside tables is round.
- _____ 10. In the picture on the bedroom wall, the cow is jumping over the barn.

Part IV: Essay (Extra Credit)

Write or tell your answer to one of these questions to get extra points on your test.

- 1. What things change in the bedroom as the book goes from beginning to end?
- 2. Describe the animals that appear in this book.

COMPREHENSION TEST B

Part I: Matching (10 points)

Read each description. Find the name on the right that matches the description. Write the letter of the name in the space in front of the description.

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| _____ 1. Animal in a picture on the wall, shown with the moon. | a. old lady bunny |
| _____ 2. Animal who falls asleep in the bed. | b. white mouse |
| _____ 3. Animal who sits in a rocking chair, knitting. | c. cow |
| _____ 4. Animal who falls asleep on the rocking chair. | d. young bunny |
| _____ 5. Animal who sits on the windowsill and watches the moon. | e. kitten |

Part II: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Choose the best ending for each sentence. Write the letter of the ending you chose in the space in front of each sentence.

- | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| _____ 1. The walls of the bunny's bedroom are | (a) green. | (b) red. | (c) yellow. |
| _____ 2. The kittens on the floor play with | (a) the mouse. | (b) a squeaky ball. | (c) yarn. |
| _____ 3. For a bedtime snack, the young bunny has | (a) a slice of pizza. | (b) a bowl of mush. | (c) a dish of ice cream. |
| _____ 4. The old lady bunny whispers | (a) "hush." | (b) "goodnight." | (c) "sleep tight." |
| _____ 5. On the bunny's bedside table is a | (a) toy animal. | (b) framed photo. | (c) book. |
| _____ 6. The bunny rhymes when he says goodnight to | (a) mouse and clocks. | (b) bears and chairs. | (c) comb and brush. |
| _____ 7. In the night sky, through the windows, we see | (a) the setting sun. | (b) clouds. | (c) the moon and stars. |
| _____ 8. We first see the bunny in bed at | (a) 6 o'clock. | (b) 7 o'clock. | (c) 8 o'clock. |
| _____ 9. On the last page, the story says, "Goodnight | (a) noises everywhere." | (b) red balloon." | (c) great green room." |
| _____ 10. On each side of the bunny's bed is a | (a) chair. | (b) light. | (c) table. |

Part III: True/False (20 points)

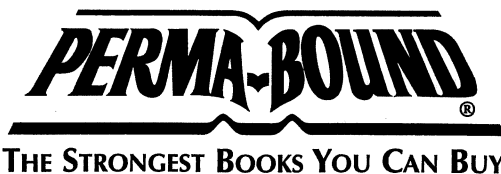
Mark each sentence with a **T** if it is true or an **F** if any part of it is false.

- _____ 1. The bunny's bedroom gets darker as the book goes on.
- _____ 2. The bunny's bedside light is still on at the end of the book.
- _____ 3. A fire is burning in the bunny's bedroom fireplace.
- _____ 4. The bunny eats his whole bowl of mush before he falls asleep.
- _____ 5. The mouse is in the same place in the room in each picture.
- _____ 6. The old lady bunny is *not* in her chair at the beginning and the ending of the story.
- _____ 7. The mouse and the kittens say, "Goodnight bunny."
- _____ 8. In the picture on the bedroom wall, the bears are sitting in chairs.
- _____ 9. The little bunny likes his/her bedroom.
- _____ 10. The old lady closes the bedroom curtains to make the bedroom dark for the little bunny.

Part IV: Essay (Extra Credit)

Write or tell your answer to one of these questions to get extra points on your test.

- 1. What colors do you see most in this book? How do the colors make you feel?
- 2. Describe the little bunny's bedtime routine.



PERMA-BOUND BOOKS • 617 East Vandalia Road • Jacksonville, Illinois 62650
Toll Free 1-800-637-6581 • Fax 1-800-551-1169
E-mail: books@perma-bound.com

PERMA-BOUND CANADA • Box 517, Station A • Willowdale, Ontario M2N 5T1
Toll Free 1-800-461-1999 • Fax 1-888-250-3811
E-mail: perma-bound.ca@sympatico.ca

VISIT OUR WEB SITE: <http://www.perma-bound.com>