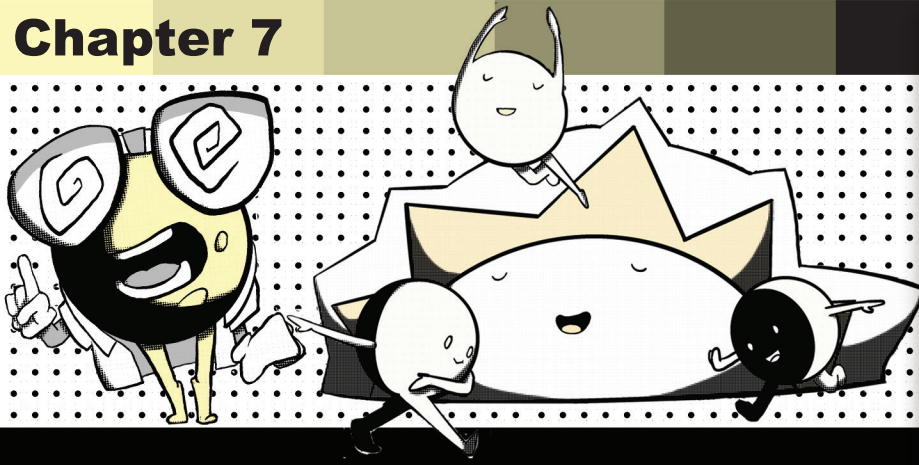


Chapter 7



Solar Eclipse Language Arts

Author Helen Headrick | Illustrator Philip Goudeau

NEVER LOOK DIRECTLY AT THE SUN WITHOUT ECLIPSE GLASSES!

Events like the solar eclipse can be a great inspiration for creative writing, no matter how old you are.

For younger students, there are quite a few nursery rhymes that mention the Sun or Moon, like Twinkle Twinkle Little Star and Hey Diddle Diddle. The first is a rhyme, while the second is a nonsensical verse.

Materials needed:

Copies of lyrics of the above songs, paper and pencils or pens

Your friends, family and classmates can help you identify the rhyming words in a nursery rhyme like Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. A rhyme is a correspondence of sound between words or the endings of words, especially when these are used at the ends of lines of poetry. Using what you learned about rhyming words, you can write your own rhyming verse about the eclipse.

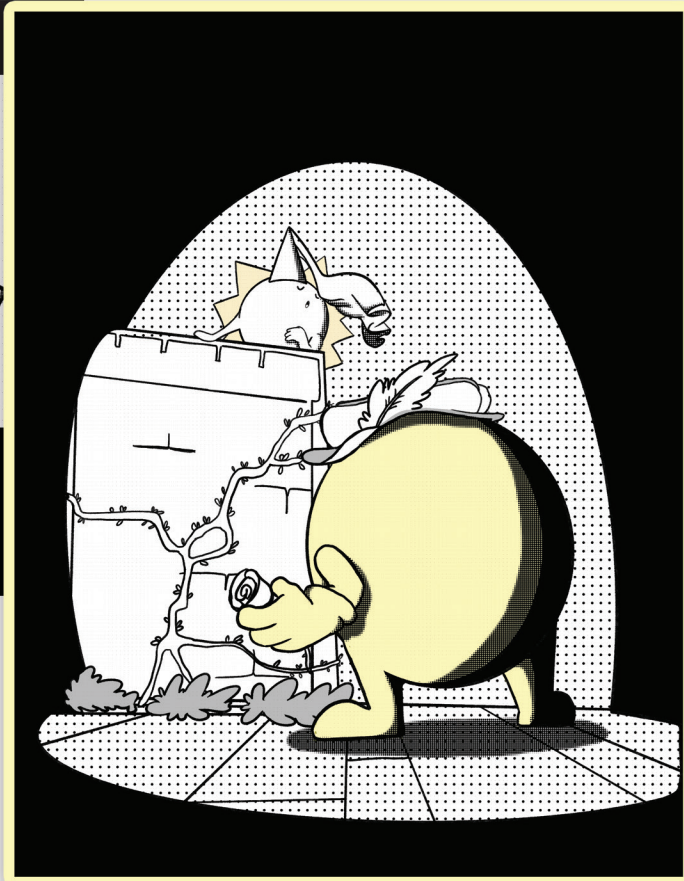
Your friends, family and classmates can help you identify the nonsensical parts in a nursery rhyme like Hey Diddle Diddle. Nonsensical means it doesn't have to make sense. Using what you learned about nonsensical words and phrases, you can write your own nonsensical verse about the eclipse.

You can also find other nursery rhymes that mention the Sun or Moon and write your own verse in the same style.

Older students can use more complicated writing styles. You could also challenge yourself to use as many scientific terms as possible to accurately explain this event. It might also be fun to try to use as many creative ways you can think of to describe the event.

Materials needed: paper and pencils or pens

Write your own story or your own verse, maybe rhyming or nonsensical, about the eclipse.



You could use other eclipse myths to inspire your own myth or story like those created by ancient peoples who did not understand the science behind eclipses. The Tewa people of New Mexico believed that an eclipse was a sign that the Sun Father was angry and had gone to his house in the underworld. The eclipse mythology of the Pomo tribe of California centers on a bear walking along the Milky Way who gets into an argument with the Sun and takes a bite out of the Sun. Your story may be of a fearful or positive nature.

You could also use real historical events. There was a partial solar eclipse on July 6, 1776. Write a journal entry as if you lived in that time that mentions both the Declaration of Independence and the eclipse.

Vocabulary

Lyric - expressing the writer's emotions, usually briefly and in stanzas or recognized forms

Verse - writing arranged with a metrical rhythm, typically having a rhyme

Mythology - a collection of myths, especially one belonging to a particular religious or cultural tradition

Newspaper Connections

Research the relationship between Halley's Comet and Mark Twain, then write a newspaper style obituary that cleverly includes the story of Twain's quote, "Now here are these two unaccountable freaks; they came in together, they must go out together."