



Binyomin's Brave Question

Ages 6-9
A story and 9 activities

Binyomin's Brave Question

Morah Zahava is explaining how the moon changes shape, and Binyomin is lost.

She draws circles on the board. A thin crescent. A half. A full round one. She talks about the Earth moving around the sun and the moon moving around the Earth. Some words fly past his ears like birds. Orbit. Phase. Reflect.

Binyomin looks around. Everyone else is nodding. Yossi is nodding. Tzivia is nodding. Even Leah, who sometimes draws in the margins, is nodding.

He isn't nodding. His mind has gotten stuck on one thing: How does the moon get dark in the first place?

He raises his hand a tiny bit, then lowers it. What if it is a silly question? What if everyone laughs? What if Morah says, "We just covered that"?

He puts his hand under his chin and pretends to understand.

At the end of the lesson, Morah Zahava hands out a worksheet. The first question says, "Explain why the moon looks different at different times." Binyomin stares at it. He doesn't know what to write.

His heart beats faster. He glances around. Everyone is writing already.

Then he remembers a poster on the classroom wall, one Morah has put up in September. It says: A question is a gift. The only silly question is the one you don't ask.

He takes a breath. He raises his hand.

"Yes, Binyomin?"

His voice comes out smaller than he wants. "Morah, I don't get something. Why does the moon look dark sometimes? Does it disappear?"

Morah Zahava smiles. "That is an excellent question."

A girl behind him whispers, "I was wondering that too."

"The moon never disappears," says Morah. "It's always there, like a big round ball. But it doesn't make its own light. It reflects the sun. Part of it is always lit up, and part of it is in shadow. What we see from Earth depends on where the moon is in its path."

She takes a flashlight and a small ball. She holds the ball up and shines the flashlight on one side. "See? The side facing the light is bright. The other side is dark. As the ball moves, we see more or less of the bright part."

Binyomin's mouth falls open. "Ohhh."

"Does that help?"

"Yes! Now I get it. It's like a flashlight on a ball."

"Exactly. Do you want to try?"

She hands him the ball. He moves it around, slowly, in front of the beam, and watches the light slide from a sliver to a half to a whole.

"That's amazing."

"Thank you for asking," says Morah. "You helped everyone."

After class, Tzivia leans over. "I'm glad you asked. I didn't get it either."

"Really? You were nodding."

"I was pretending."

They both laugh.

That night, Binyomin stands on the porch with his father and looks up at the sky. A thin crescent moon hangs over the roof.

"Totty, see? The sun is lighting up part of it."

"Where did you learn that?"

"I asked a question," says Binyomin proudly.



Activity 1 of 9

Remember the story

1. What is Morah Zahava teaching?

2. What does Binyomin ask?

3. What does Morah use to show it?

4. What does the poster on the wall say?



Activity 2 of 9

Fact or guess? (circle one)

1. Tzivia is pretending to understand too. Fact / Guess
2. Everyone laughs at Binyomin's question. Fact / Guess
3. The moon reflects the sun's light. Fact / Guess
4. Binyomin shows his father the crescent moon. Fact / Guess



Activity 3 of 9

Think and write

1. Why is it hard for Binyomin to ask?

2. How does his question help others?

3. What is a question you've been wanting to ask?

Activity 4 of 9

Word search (find all 6)

Words: MOON, QUESTION, FLASHLIGHT, ORBIT, BRAVE, CRESCENT

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



Activity 5 of 9

Scrambled words (from the story)

1. MONO = _____

2. TUQEOISN = _____

3. NRECESTC = _____

4. HALFTGSLHI = _____

5. TOESRP = _____



Activity 6 of 9

Say it out loud

Practice each line in a calm, steady voice:

"I don't understand yet. Can you explain?"

"That's a great question."

"I was wondering that too."



Activity 7 of 9

My chart

My Questions Chart

#	What I wondered	Who I asked	What I learned
Question 1			
Question 2			
Question 3			



Activity 8 of 9

Draw it

Draw a ball lit by a flashlight showing the moon from a sliver to full.





Activity 9 of 9

Answers

Remember the story:

1. How the moon changes shape
2. Why the moon looks dark sometimes
3. A flashlight and a ball
4. A question is a gift

Fact or guess: 1 Fact; 2 Guess; 3 Fact; 4 Fact

Scrambled words: MOON, QUESTION, CRESCENT, FLASHLIGHT, POSTER

Think and write: answers will vary; talk them over together.