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Star Stuff: Carl Sagan And The Mysteries Of The Cosmos



Synopsis

For every child who has ever looked up at the stars and asked, "What are they?" comes the story of a curious boy who never stopped wondering: Carl Sagan. When Carl Sagan was a young boy he went to the 1939 World's Fair and his life was changed forever. From that day on he never stopped marveling at the universe and seeking to understand it better. *Star Stuff* follows Carl from his days star gazing from the bedroom window of his Brooklyn apartment, through his love of speculative science fiction novels, to his work as an internationally renowned scientist who worked on the Voyager missions exploring the farthest reaches of space. This book introduces the beloved man who brought the mystery of the cosmos into homes across America to a new generation of dreamers and star gazers.

Book Information

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Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

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Gr 1-3 • Told in narrative format, this beautifully designed and illustrated picture book gives readers a glimpse into the childhood wonderings Sagan experienced as he looked at the night sky and imagined the possibilities. The images are wonderfully childlike, many appearing to be

chalk on a dark, night sky background. The simple but lyrical text ("Carl thought about the stars hanging down like bulbs on long black wires") conveys a dreamy, wistful quality, and the comic book-style panels and speech bubbles will keep kids intrigued as Sisson takes Sagan from an inquisitive boy to a scientist working in the field of astronomy. One particularly magnificent page should elicit gasps of awe from readers. It folds out to create a marvelous expanse that extends from a library room, where young Sagan is poring over a book about the solar system, up through the city landscape and ever upward toward the sun. Children will easily relate to and may even see themselves in Sagan's youthful exuberance. Detailed notes illustrate the solid research and facts behind the narrative. A gorgeous, informative offering for biography and science collections. —Maggie Chase, Boise State University, ID

—*"Beginning with the first page, Sisson introduces the magnitude of the universe, visually presenting the Milky Way and our sun's place in it. The Horn Book, STARRED REVIEW*—*"Carl Sagan is best known for being a renowned expert on the cosmos, but he started out as just a curious kid fascinated with the night sky, and that's where Sisson starts this picture-book biography. Booklist*—*"Sisson's economical narrative and lighthearted illustrations convey Sagan's regard for the power of imagination and his generous approach to knowledge . . . Both friendly and inspiring. KIRKUS, STARRED REVIEW*—*"Told in narrative format, this beautifully designed and illustrated picture book gives readers a glimpse into the childhood wonderings Sagan experienced as he looked at the night sky and imagined possibilities . . . A gorgeous, informative offering for biography and science collections. School Library Journal, STARRED REVIEW*—*"A broader message about the role wonder plays in innovation resonates throughout this story. Publishers Weekly*

My 4 y/o son is interested in all things science, and why shouldn't he be, the world is beautiful and full of curiosities. So I got Star Stuff for him to help keep him inspired with the story of a boy who fed his curiosity enough that he was able to do it as a grown up. What a wonderful job, to ask questions and find answers! He really likes it, too. It's a simple story with beautiful illustrations. And it does a good job of inspiring awe in a child's way, of poking curiosity. You can see the child's wheels turning as they look at the pictures and think about their own thoughts, observations, and dreams.

Great story - read this with my children and they enjoyed the various interactive parts of the book

with flaps, etc. Really recommend this to anyone with children passionate about stars or just a child who spends a lot of time wondering. Great brief glimpse into the life of Carl Sagan.

The book is great for parents wanting to introduce their children to the wonderful and inspiring Carl Sagan. Beautifully illustrated. My only complaint, is that this book can lose the interest of younger children. They do not know who Carl Sagan is, so while it's great to tell his story, it only really serves to give those who already know him an insight. It doesn't give children a full scope as to who this man was and his legacy. It could have been handled better. Despite that, this book is still beautiful and a good read. Lovely addition to my son's book collection.

I got this book for my 7 yr. old son for Christmas. He likes it well enough but that's with a lot of explanation and elaboration from us when we read it to him. The illustrations are absolutely fantastic and in part make up for the rest of the book which feels rather lacking. The storyline is actually hard to follow. It's written in what I assume is a simple fashion for kids but the storyline is very choppy and leaves out connections/transitions between the parts of the story. Also, it implies rather than clearly explains Sagan's major contributions to science education and to the Voyager projects. When I read it, I need to stop frequently and fill in the gaps for my son. I sort of wish I had chosen another book, although we do like the pictures a lot. Sort of a toss up -- my son does enjoy it but with better writing I think it could have been a much better book.

This is such a beautiful, wonderful book. The illustrations are lovely. The story is really sweet and cool, too. It starts out with Carl Sagan's childhood, and walks you through his fascination with the universe, and the steps he takes throughout his life to learn more about it and contribute to science. It is also really accurate/well researched (there are references and notes in the very back, and more information on Carl, too.) I got this for my boyfriend for his birthday, because Carl Sagan is his hero. He absolutely loved it, and we are both very happy with it.

I found the illustrations quite incredible. The author/illustrator is a great with illustrations. But unfortunately I found the writing average. There was nothing exciting or so interesting I wanted to turn the page to learn more. It did little to get me excited about what should have been a very exciting topic/story about an extraordinary scientist. I think kids might feel the same way and stop reading.

STAR STUFF Carl Segan! The most famous scientist to ever live is the subject of this beautifully illustrated book. Author/illustrator, Stephanie Ross Sisson, has taken complex scientific subjects, and, just like Mr. Segan, communicated them in a way that everyone can understand. This book is guaranteed to make young readers long to learn all they can about the mysteries of our universe. Like gazing into starlit skies, every child should have the opportunity to meet Carl Segan, the stargazer extraordinaire. When they read this book, they will not only meet him, but they will find a very special place in their hearts where he will live forever.

It's incredibly important to raise children with scientific literacy and an understanding on how the natural world actually works. A joy for any secular parent and an absolute necessity for everyone else.

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