

# Over the Moon

## VIEWING GUIDE

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## teaching the film

Watch **Over the Moon** on Netflix then join us for a fun and educational Q&A to learn about the making of this visually stunning and moving animated musical adventure. Director Glen Keane will be doing some live drawing that participants can follow along with at home.

Taught in conjunction with this guide, the film will encourage students to learn more about

Chinese culture and STEM , while also developing their social emotional skills. This study guide is intended to flexibly support educators and families alike. Please feel free to adapt and abridge the content as necessary to meet your unique learning objectives and circumstances.

Recommended for ages 6 and up.

## subject areas

**Asian American Studies**

**English Language Arts**

**Peer/Youth Issues**

**Social Emotional Development**

**Social Studies/History**

**STEAM**

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All SFFILM Education materials are developed in alignment with California educational standards for media literacy. SFFILM Education welcomes feedback and questions on all printed study materials.

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# about the film

**Directed by Glen Keane.**

**(US 2020) English, 95 min**

**Over the Moon on Netflix**

Fueled with determination and a passion for science, a bright young girl builds a rocket ship to the moon to prove the existence of a legendary Moon Goddess. There she ends up on an unexpected quest, and discovers a whimsical land of fantastical creatures. Directed by animation legend Glen Keane, and produced by Gennie Rim and Peilin Chou, **Over the Moon** is an exhilarating

musical adventure about moving forward, embracing the unexpected, and the power of imagination. The film stars Cathy Ang (Fei Fei), Phillipa Soo (Chang'e), Robert G. Chiu (Chin), Ken Jeong (Gobi), John Cho (Dad), Ruthie Ann Miles (Mom), Margaret Cho (Auntie Ling), Kimiko Glenn (Auntie Mei), Artt Butler (Uncle), Conrad Ricarmora (Hou-yi) and Sandra Oh (Mrs. Zhong).



## **Glen Keane, Director**

A 38-year veteran of Walt Disney Feature Animation, Glen Keane trained under Walt Disney's Nine Old Men. Keane went on to create many beloved Disney characters such as The Little Mermaid, Aladdin, The Beast, Tarzan, and Rapunzel. In 2012, Keane departed Disney to begin Glen Keane Productions as a way to further his artistic explorations in animation, design, and film. He has since gone on to collaborate with Google, the Paris Ballet, and Kobe Bryant.



## **Gennie Rim, Producer**

Gennie Rim is an Emmy award-winning producer whose career in animation spans 20+ years. She has worked at Pixar and Disney on various films such as The Incredibles, Cars, Ratatouille, and Up. After leaving Disney, she produced several independent and commercial projects including the Academy Award-winning animated short Dear Basketball with Glen Keane and the late Kobe Bryant.



## **Peilin Chou, Producer**

Peilin Chou is a Producer for Netflix Animation whose career in content creation spans 20+ years encompassing the realms of film, television, and theater. As Chief Creative Officer of Pearl Studio, Peilin produced Pearl Studio's first original film Abominable, a co-production with DreamWorks Animation, which opened at #1 at the U.S. box office in 2019. Peilin started her career at the Walt Disney Studios where she was part of the creative development team that oversaw dozens of feature films projects.



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# discussion questions

## Characters, Setting and Story

- Take note of the beginning of the film. What is the setting? What things do you observe in the setting that are important to Fei Fei?
- Before Fei Fei met Chang'e on the moon, what did the goddess represent to her? Did her perception change after they met in person?
- Did Fei Fei's relationship with mooncakes change after her mom passed? Why or why not?
- How did Fei Fei feel around her family throughout the film? How did her family change, and how did she react to the change?
- The five stages of grief are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Do you think Fei Fei went through all of those stages after she lost her Ma Ma? How did Fei Fei develop emotionally throughout the film?
- How were Fei Fei and Chang'e connection in this story? How were they similar? How did they help each other deal with their respective loss?
- Traditions are important in families, and in this film, one of the traditions is that Fei Fei and her mom make mooncakes together. Does your family have important traditions you practice together? Why do you

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**My nai nai always told me the circle of a mooncake is the symbol of a family coming together.**

practice these traditions? What are some struggles or challenges that you encounter when practicing these traditions? What makes them fun?

- Have you ever lost someone from your life that was really important to you? Was that experience difficult? How did you cope? What did you learn?
- Do you have any traditions you or your family practice to honor the people you have lost? If yes, how do these traditions make you feel?
- Why do you think Fei Fei had such a hard time accepting her new stepmother and stepbrother at first? Do you have any stepparents or siblings? What is your relationship with them like?

## Moon Festival

- Was this the first time you learned about the Legend of Chang'e, or had you heard of it before? If you have heard it before, did you hear a different version of the legend? If you hadn't heard of it, have you learned about any other Chinese myths or legends?
- Do you celebrate the Moon Festival every year? What does your family do to celebrate? If you have never celebrated the Moon Festival before, would you like to attend a celebration?
- Do you have any other traditions or celebrations that are important to your family and/or culture?
- In the film, Mooncakes were really important to Fei Fei and her family. Does your family love to cook a specific food together? If the answer is yes, when do you cook this food? How does it make you feel when you spend that time cooking with family?
- Did you learn anything you didn't already know about Chinese culture from the film?





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# activities

## Read The Legend of Chang'e

How is this version of the legend different than the one portrayed in the film? How do you think different versions of these legends form over time?

## Make Moon Cakes

A fun and delicious way to experience the Moon Festival! Spend some time with your family or your class making your own mooncakes from scratch. Here is a helpful and creative [instructional video](#).

## Make Chinese Paper Lanterns

Lanterns are an important part of decorating for the Moon Festival, and guess what, you can make them yourself!

Here's what you will need:

- [Lantern template](#)
- Printer
- 8.5 x 11" printer paper or card stock
- Tape
- Cotton twine string
- Optional: stickers, gold paint pen, decorative washi tape (eg, sparkly, assorted)

Find more details and instructions [here](#).

## Read "Thanking the Moon"

"[Thanking the Moon](#)" by Grace Lin follows a Chinese American family as they celebrate the Mid-Autumn Moon Festival. After diving into this beautiful book, read [Grace's blog](#) about the Chinese Moon Festival!

## Learn About the Moon's Phases

Have you ever wondered why the moon seems to be a different shape every night? This [NASA classroom activity](#) will help you understand why!

## Build a Magnetic Levitation Rocket

You can build a miniature magnetic levitation rocket just like Fei Fei used to get to the moon! [This science project](#) takes less than a day to create and \$20-\$50 to construct!

## Read "Women in Science"

Do you dream of working in STEM some day? Get curious about the field! "[Women in Science](#)" highlights the contributions of fifty notable women from STEM fields, from the ancient to the modern world.

## Create a Memory Box

Memory boxes are a great way to honor someone special that you lost from your life. Create special collections of items that remind you of the treasured memories that you created with your loved one. Viewing the items in the memory box at a later time can help you cope with any grief you may be feeling.

## Start a Journal

See if therapeutic writing can help you with grief or loss. Journaling can be beneficial for loosening up painful emotions. If done regularly when anxiety or sadness appears, it can also keep us from acting out in harmful or hurtful ways.

## The Legend of Chang'e

No one is certain of all the details of the Chang'e legend, but the story goes something like this:

Chang'e was a beautiful young girl working in the Jade Emperor's palace in heaven, where immortals, good people and fairies lived. One day, she accidentally broke a precious porcelain jar. Angered, the Jade Emperor banished her to live on earth, where ordinary people lived. She could return to the Heaven, if she contributed a valuable service on earth.

Chang'e was transformed into a member of a poor farming family. When she was 18, a young hunter named Hou Yi from another village spotted her, now a beautiful young woman. They became friends.

One day, a strange phenomenon occurred -- 10 suns arose in the sky instead one, blazing the earth. Hou Yi, an expert archer, stepped forward to try to save the earth. He successfully shot down nine of the suns, becoming an instant hero. He eventually became king and married Chang'e.

But Hou Yi grew to become a despot. He sought immortality by ordering an elixir be created to prolong his life. The elixir in the form of a single pill was almost ready when Chang'e came upon it. She either accidentally or purposely swallowed the pill. This angered King Hou Yi, who went after his wife. Trying to flee, she jumped out the window of a chamber at the top of palace -- and, instead of falling, she floated into the sky toward the moon.

King Hou Yi tried to shoot her down with arrows, but without success. Once on the moon, Chang'e became a three-legged toad, as punishment from the Queen Mother, according to one version of the legend. Her companion, a rabbit, is constantly pounding the elixir of immortality in a large mortar.

Meanwhile, King Hou Yi ascended to the sun and built a palace. So Chang'e and Hou Yi came to represent the yin and yang, the moon and the sun.



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## screening with meaning

We live in a world where technology mediates a large portion of human interaction and the exchange of information. Every projected image, every word published on a page or a website, and every sound from a speaker reaches its audience through the medium, through the language of the device. The ability to parse the vast array of media messages is an essential skill for young people, particularly in a mainstream commercial culture that targets youth as a vulnerable, impressionable segment of the American marketplace. Most students already have a keen understanding of the languages different media use and the techniques they employ to inspire particular emotions or reactions, but they often lack the skill or awareness to fully deconstruct the messages they continuously receive.

Analysis of a media message—or any piece of mass media content—can best be accomplished by first identifying its principal characteristics:

(1) Medium: the physical means by which it is contained and/or delivered

(2) Author: the person(s) responsible for its creation and dissemination

(3) Content: the information, emotions, values or ideas it conveys

(4) Audience: the target audience to whom it is delivered

(5) Purpose: the objectives of its authors and the effects of its dissemination.

Students who can readily identify these

five core characteristics will be equipped to understand the incentives at work behind media messages, as well as their potential consequences. Media literacy education empowers students to become responsible consumers, active citizens and critical thinkers.

## media literacy resources

For information about media literacy standards:

[MediaLiteracy.com](http://MediaLiteracy.com) Resources for Advancing Media Education

[California Department of Education's Media Literacy Resources](http://California Department of Education's Media Literacy Resources)

Frank W Baker's guide to State Standards for [Media Literacy](#)

## mental, emotional, and social health standards

[Health Education Content Standards for California Public Schools - K-12](#)

1.1.M Explain positive social behaviors (e.g., helping others, being respectful to others, cooperation, consideration).

1.2.M Identify a variety of nonviolent ways to respond when angry or upset.

1.3.M Identify qualities that contribute to a positive self-image.

1.4.M Describe how emotions change during adolescence.

1.5.M Recognize diversity among people, including disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, and body size.

1.7.M Describe the benefits of having positive relationships with trusted adults.

5.3.M Describe healthy ways to express caring, friendship, affection, and love.

5.4.M Describe situations for which someone would seek help with stress, loss, an unrealistic body image, or depression

7.1.M Demonstrate effective coping mechanisms and strategies for managing stress.

7.2.M Practice respect for individual differences and diverse backgrounds.

8.1.M Promote a positive and respectful school environment.

## common core state standards

### Kindergarten

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.1

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.6



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# common core state standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.6

## 1st Grade

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.1  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.2

## 2nd Grade

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.1  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.2

## 3rd Grade

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1

## 4th Grade

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1

## 5th Grade

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1

## 6th-8th Grade

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.9

# tools for analyzing media

## MEDIUM

All Media Is Constructed.

- What is the message, how is it delivered and in what format?
- What technologies are used to present the message?
- What visual and auditory elements comprise the media content?
- What expectations do you bring to the content, given its medium and format?

## CONTENT

Media Is A Language For Information.

- What is the subject of the media message?
- What information, values, emotions or ideas are conveyed by the media content?
- What tools does the author employ to engage the

viewer and evoke a response?

## PURPOSE

All Media Messages Are Constructed for a Reason.

- Why was the message constructed?
- Who benefits from dissemination of the message? How?
- To what extent does the message achieve its purpose?
- What effect does the message have on the audience it reaches, if any?

## AUTHOR

All Media Is Constructed by Someone.

- Who is delivering the message?
- Who originally constructed the message?

- What expectations do you have of the content, given its author(s)?

## AUDIENCE

All Media Messages Reach an Audience.

- Who receives the message?
- For whom is the message intended?
- What is the public reaction to the media content and/or its message?
- What is your reaction to the media content and/or its message?
- How might others perceive this message differently? Why?

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# what is animation?

Animation is a process used to create motion pictures through the combination of still images (e.g., digital graphics, photographs of drawings, photographs of objects, etc.) which, when played in sequence, create the illusion of movement. All

television cartoons, for example, are animations, and are made up of thousands of still images (drawn by hand or on a computer) that are played sequentially, along with a soundtrack, to tell a story.

# types of animation

- Classic animation (e.g., Disney's The Lion King, most TV cartoons)
- Rotoscope (e.g., Star Wars lightsabers)
- Flip books
- 3D animation (e.g., Pixar's Toy Story, Wall-E, Up)

- Stereoscopic 3D (e.g., Avatar)
- Cut-out / Silhouette animation (e.g., South Park)
- Claymation (e.g., Nick Park's Wallace and Gromit)
- Puppet animation (e.g., Tim Burton's The Nightmare Before Christmas, Coraline)

# history of animation

The world's most famous animator, Walt Disney, began making short animated cartoons based on children's stories in 1923. In 1928 he introduced Mickey Mouse in the first animated sound cartoon, Steamboat Willie, which became an immediate sensation. Throughout the next decade, Disney would add such elements as carefully synchronized music (The Skeleton Dance, 1929), Technicolor (Flowers and Trees, 1932), and the illusion of depth with his multi-plane camera (The Old Mill, 1937), a device that allowed for animated cells to be photographed against a three-dimensional background. Although not the first animated feature, Disney's Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs (1937) was the first to use up-to-the-minute techniques and the first to receive widespread release. The film's success can be attributed in part to Disney's willingness to use animation to create a profound dramatic experience. He strove for photographic realism in films such as Pinocchio (1940), Dumbo (1941) and Bambi (1942).

The success of television cartoons led to the virtual disappearance of animated shorts produced for theatrical release. Animated featurelength films, however, flourished, especially after the release of Disney's The Little Mermaid (1989), regarded by many as the studio's best animated feature in decades. Other Disney blockbusters followed, including Beauty and the Beast (1991), Aladdin (1992), The Lion King (1994) and Lilo & Stitch (2002). The development of computer animation was another great advancement in the form and resulted in feature films of astounding visual sumptuousness. In 1995, Toy Story was the first film to use only computer generated imagery (CGI). In 2001 the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences added a new Academy Award for Best Animated Feature Film. The first recipient of the award was Shrek history of (2001).