One Giant Leap

Robert Burleigh

Paintings by Mike Wimmer

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The sense of immediacy is irresistible and will cause children who consider the event just ancient history to feel as if they too had left footprints on that distant, dusty surface."—School Library Journal

Only July 29, 1969, as Americans sat glued to their televisions and radios, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin did the seemingly impossible—something humans had dreamed of doing for centuries: They traveled 240,000 miles through space and set foot on the moon. One small step for man; one giant leap for mankind. This achievement not only brought the moon within reach, but now everything seemed possible. If it could be imagined, it could be done.

Book Information

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Age Range: 6 - 8 years

Grade Level: 1 - 3

Customer Reviews

The lunar module, Eagle, separated from the Columbia and began its descent to the moon. Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin looked down at the moon with amazement. "Its billion-year-old landscape [was] cracked and scarred. Its surface gouged and cratered and pitted with many holes." It was an adventure the world's eyes were riveted on, one they would never forget. It was July 20, 1969 and they were about to touch down on the surface of the moon. It was touch and go, but they made it! Buzz and Neil got into their "moon cocoons" and prepared to go outside, while Michael Collins, who, was still orbiting the moon, listened closely. Neil stepped onto the surface of the moon.
and spoke to the millions watching and listening, “that's one small step for man-one giant leap for mankind.” It was an amazing technological feat that got them there. They collected rocks to take back to the scientists and later said, when they were inside the module, the moon smell was "like spent cap pistols." It would be a risky venture, one of no return if they could not dock back up with the Columbia. How were they going to do this when they were going more than 3,000 miles an hour? This was a wonderful tribute to the astronauts and their part in one of the most momentous events in history. The paintings are stunning and their slightly surreal quality meshes perfectly with the event. With advanced technology practically at the fingertips of the young today, it is often difficult to impart the excitement of a moon landing, but there is just the right amount of tension in this story to do just that!

This is an engaging, lovely illustrated book ...especially if you’re needing a story geared for both genders. Some of the best stories are more engaging for the girls, this seems to be great for boys. It is geared for the older child. The text portions, accurate and historic are a little dry to entertain the pre-K crowd....and that IS afterall how it’s written. But it is a super book for the story of the magnificent Armstrong/Aldrin feat! A wonderful segway: "you CAN do anything" if you really, really, really work hard at it!

I know a good book when it is chosen repeatedly by the same children over and over. That is what makes it a wise purchase too! The illustrations are fabulous and the faces and expressions of the astronauts give the children a personal introduction to the first men on the moon. They are friends to know and remember in this book!

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