

The Moon Today

A Full English translation is available.

今天的月亮

Author: Hsiao-Chi Chang **Illustrator:** Hsiao-Chi Chang **Publisher:** Nan I Book Enterprise Co., Ltd.

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Translator: Chenxin Jiang

Giraffe has a strong feeling that he has seen today's moon before. But where? Giraffe thinks and thinks, yet he simply can't remember. Giraffe thinks so hard that his head starts to heat up. All the surrounding animals help him cool down and remember. What exactly does today's moon remind him of?

Beloved by young readers and selected for the Ministry of Education's Bookstart program two years in a row, this charming picture book features Hsiao-Chi Chang's whimsical and free-spirited illustrations. It encourages children to observe, imagine, and connect everyday things, opening the door to a world of boundless creativity and playful thinking.



Author **Hsiao-Chi Chang**

Hsiao-Chi Chang graduated from the Fine Arts Department at National Kaohsiung Normal University and earned her Master degree from the Academy of Art University in the U.S., specializing in children's picture books. She loves stars, fish, and milk tea, and spends much of her time observing—people, objects, moments, stories, and the sky. When she wants to be alone, she slips away to unfamiliar places and hides in quiet corners to draw. Her works were selected for the Bologna Illustrators Exhibition in 2020 and 2021, and were also recognized by the American 3x3 Illustration Awards.

A Creative Challenge Sparked by the Moon

by Shan-Chung Yang

The associative theory of creativity, a foundational concept in psychology, proposes that creativity is closely tied to the ability to connect ideas, concepts, and pieces of information that seem unrelated at first glance. According to this theory, highly creative individuals excel at linking disparate elements and weaving them into something cohesive. They draw on their existing knowledge and reorganize it in fresh, original ways, generating new ideas and novel approaches to solving complex problems. From this perspective, creativity is a cognitive process—one that relies on integrating what we already know into unique, imaginative combinations.

The picture book *The Moon Today*, a compact and endearing work, uses a giraffe's tiny dilemma to spark a sequence of playful creative challenges. The giraffe observes that the moon looks a little different today: it feels strangely familiar,

as though he has seen it somewhere before. Yet no matter how hard he thinks, he cannot recall where.

In the hands of Bologna Ragazzi Award-winning illustrator Hsiao-Chi Chang, imagination easily takes flight. Chang uses bright, saturated color blocks paired with sharp black line details to create a lively, vibrant world. A green block outfitted with thin black branches suddenly becomes a cluster of small trees. A fish drawn inside a blue circle instantly transforms a blank patch of ground into a pond. A series of semi-circles, each accented with different lines, transforms into ladybugs, bowls, turtles, cars, or umbrellas. The leaps in association are unconstrained by narrative structure or character logic. Instead, they showcase a broad, generous realm of imagination. In this way, a simple shape can blossom into endless possibilities.

Chang further expands the story's

sense of wonder by portraying the giraffe's "overheating" head during his effort to recall the source of the moon's strange familiarity. This clever visual metaphor gives form to what is typically an abstract mental process. The giraffe's head seems to function almost like a small mechanical engine: once the image of the moon enters through his eyes, his mind begins spinning at full speed—so fast that smoke practically rises from his head. The moment is humorous and vivid, helping young readers visualize the intensity of thinking and the excitement of chasing ideas.

Through this childlike narrative structure, parents and educators can guide children to think alongside the giraffe and exercise their own associative imagination. Starting with simple observations—such as the moon's shape, color, or temperature—children can practice connecting what they see to their existing understanding of the world. By encouraging them to stretch these connections as far as possible, even toward things that seem distant or unrelated, adults can help children initiate their own creative association in everyday life.

Such exercises not only strengthen cognitive abilities like categorization, inference, and abstraction but also nurture a habit of looking at the world

from multiple angles. Children learn that familiar objects can carry hidden surprises, and that imagination thrives when we allow our minds to wander freely. As they grow more confident in making unexpected connections, they also become better equipped to appreciate the playful, curious side of the world around them.

In this way, *The Moon Today* is more than a simple picture book. It offers a gentle yet powerful introduction to the workings of creative thought. Through bold colors, whimsical transformations, and the giraffe's earnest attempts to solve his little mystery, the book invites readers of all ages to explore how ideas collide, combine, and reshape themselves. It reminds us that creativity often begins with noticing something small—like a moon that looks a little different—and daring to wonder where that observation might lead.

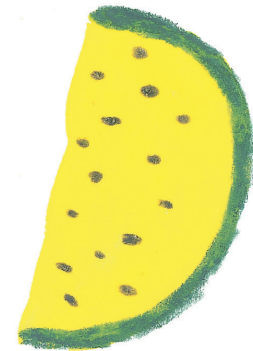
Shan-Chung Yang graduated from the Department of History at National Taiwan University and has worked as a teacher and a literary event planner. Born in the subtropical winter of a humid island, she loves the trees and climate of the temperate zone. She is a devoted bear enthusiast, and her life idol is the Adélie penguin.



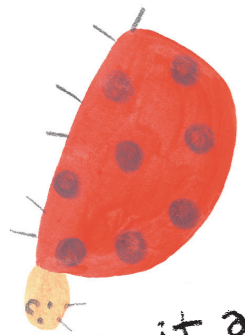
He wants to tell everyone,
but he can't pin it down.



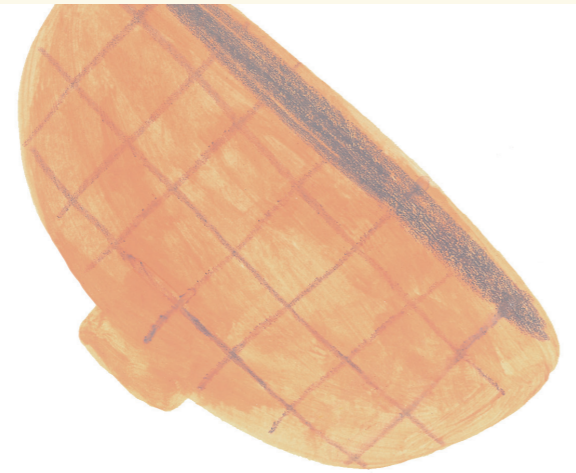
He's seen this moon before...



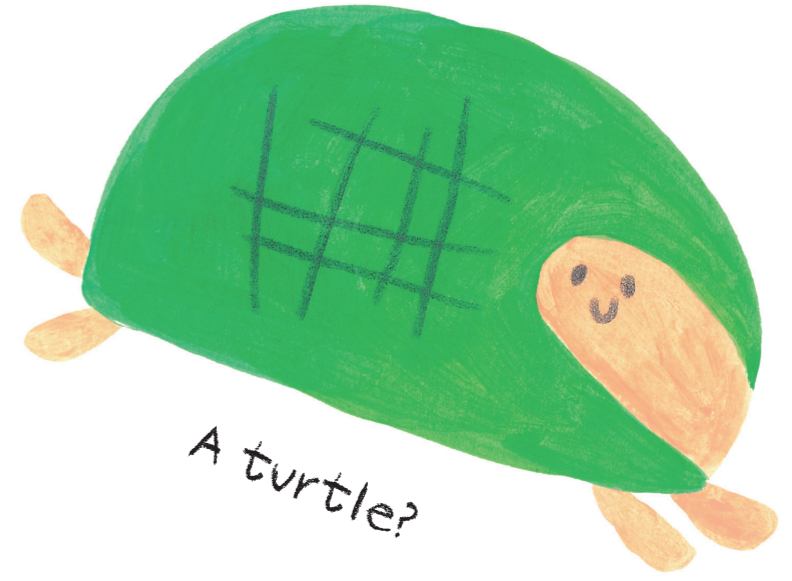
But he can't remember where.



Is it a ladybug?



A bowl?



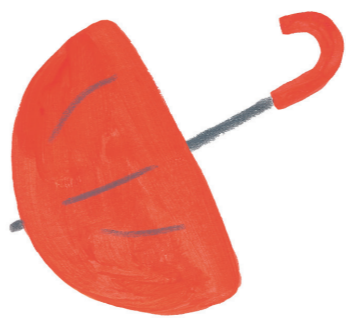
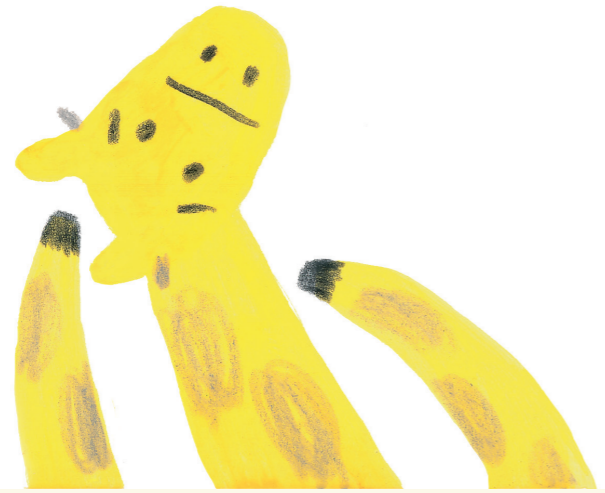
A turtle?



Or...



Is it a car?



An umbrella?