

Count the Stars

AUTHOR

RAEWYN CAISLEY

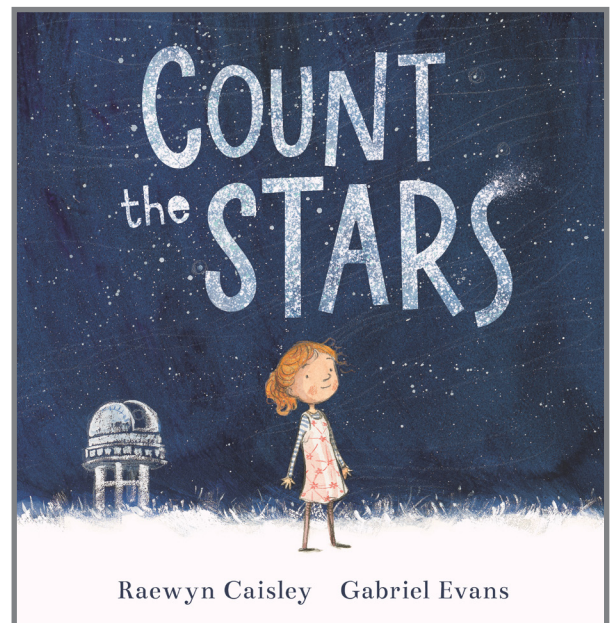
ILLUSTRATOR

GABRIEL EVANS

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

From the parallel lines of moonlight pouring through her bedroom blinds, to counting daisy petals in the garden, Maddie adores maths. If only she had a friend who marvelled at it as she does. Then Dad takes Maddie, along with her new classmate Priya, to the observatory where the unfathomable numbers of stars take their breath away.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Raewyn Caisley has enjoyed a long, and in her own words, bloomin' marvellous career. With 35 titles to her name her work has found its way into libraries and homes all over the world. She's been shortlisted multiple times, (for the Patricia Wrightson Award, the WA Premier's Award, and the Adelaide Festival Children's Literature Award), won the Speech Pathology Book of the Year and the coveted SCBWI Crystal Kite, and even had one of her titles named among the top 15 picture books published worldwide. Her literary contribution to Western Australia has recently been recognised by the WA Museum.

In primary school, maths was one of Raewyn's favourite subjects. She used to compete with a boy called Martin. When he beat her that only made her work even harder! (She didn't want to be beaten by a boy!) Mr Foy taught her about the solar system, starting a lifelong love of cosmology, but it was dear Mr Derby who introduced her to books.

Her father had a huge influence on her too, telling her girls can do anything—even become the first female astronaut, (despite growing up in small town New Zealand in the '70s and '80s!). Thankfully she decided it would be too hard to become a famous writer on the moon. Raewyn lives in Fremantle WA with her husband, Terry, and her creative, musical son, Jack.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Gabriel Evans is an Australian children's book illustrator and author. He is a dog lover, an avid oak tree grower and drinks copious amounts of tea. He currently lives in Western Australia. Gabriel's books with Sally Murphy, *Roses are Blue*, and *Penny Morrison, Captain Sneer the Buccaneer*, were Notable books in the CBCA Book of the Year Awards in 2015 and 2017 respectively. Between book projects he travels Australia giving illustration workshops and talks in schools and libraries.

STUDY NOTES

BEFORE READING

- Before reading, view the cover and title of the book and identify the following:
 - The title of the book

- The author/illustrator
- The publisher
- The blurb.
- What do you think the story might be about from looking at the title only? Do your ideas change after seeing the cover?
 - Discuss the title of the book. Do you think this is a good title? Why or why not? If you were asked to choose an alternative title for the book, what would it be? Remember, a good title should capture the audience's attentions and give them some idea of what the book is about.
 - Write your own story using the title of the picture book.
- Based on the cover, what do you think this story is about? How do you think it will begin/end? Revisit your answer after reading the story to see if your predictions were correct.

AFTER READING

- Who do you think the audience for this book is? Why?
- Is the book an imaginative, informative or persuasive text? How can you tell?
- Literary techniques allow a writer to convey a deeper meaning in their text. What techniques can you find in this text? eg. metaphor, imagery, alliteration, personification.
- What deeper meaning can you draw from the text?
- How do the illustrations add to the story? Do you think the illustrator has effectively told his story visually?
 - Cover the text in the book and write your own story following the illustrations.
- Choose one of the spreads and have a class discussion about the following illustration decisions:
 - How do the illustrations add to the story?
 - How do you think the people are feeling? What clues might there be in the pictures?
 - Is there a main colour in this spread? How does it make you feel?
 - Do the colours change from spread to spread? Why might that be?
 - Do the pictures take up the whole page, or are they framed?
 - Are any of the words bigger on the page than the others? Why could that be?