

*Getting the most from*  
**This Rock That Rock**

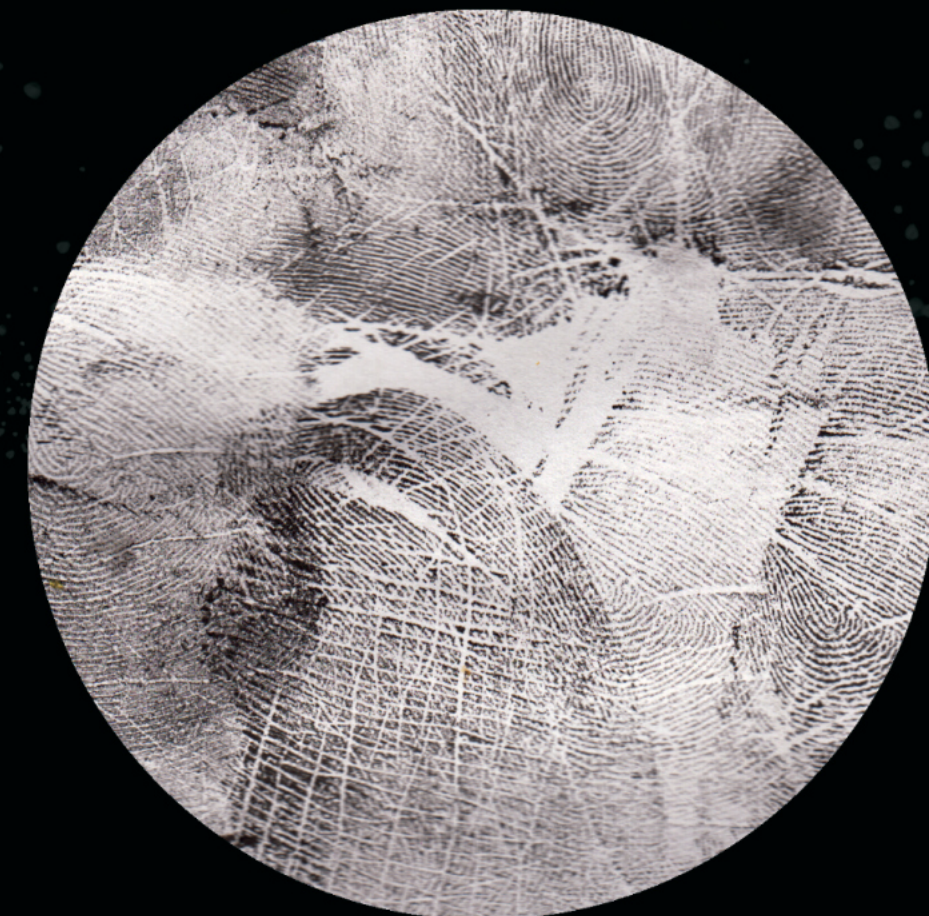
troika



"WORDS AND PICTURES THAT ARE QUITE SIMPLY  
OUT OF THIS WORLD! I LOVE THIS BOOK!" CHRIS RIDDELL

DOM CONLON  
VIVIANE SCHWARZ

**THIS  
ROCK**



**THAT  
ROCK**

POEMS BETWEEN YOU  
ME AND THE MOON



# **This Carnegie-nominated collection features fifty poems inspired by the Moon.**

“One of its significant strengths is the breathtaking amount of sheer enthusiasm and joy for the subject that it holds between its covers. Dom Conlon’s writing for this collection manages to miraculously make room for everything from mythology and folklore to history and science; from everyday lived experience to worlds of pure imagination.”

—Darren Matthews  
*Centre for Literacy in Primary Education*

## **About the author**

Dom Conlon was found swaddled in a star chart by astro monks on the steps of a remote desert observatory. The language he wailed had been never been heard on Earth but sadly it was quickly forgotten, to be replaced by ordinary words. After many years of training he began writing poetry and stories, some of which have been published in anthologies and magazines or recited late at night beneath a blue moon. During school visits he guides poetry workshops and encourages everyone to shout at him. Sometimes this results in extraordinary ideas. Sometimes it results in the desire for more cake.

## **About the illustrator**

Viviane Schwarz was born in Germany where she developed a strong interest in science and technology, as well as in traditional methods and crafts. Her first book was published in 2001. Since then she has written and/or illustrated over a dozen picture books and a graphic novel. Her books have been translated and published internationally and won awards, most notably two short-listings for the CILIP Kate Greenaway, winner of the 2016 Little Rebels Award and an IBBY Honour List nomination for illustration in 2018.



## What Am I?

Earth orbiter  
Rock blaster  
Hook scraper  
Shape caster

Sea puller  
Night lighter  
Sky watcher  
Sun biter

Footprint hoarder  
Flag carrier  
Shadow sweeper  
Meteor barrier

What am I?



## Say it

Perform the poem out loud. Listen out for patterns and rhymes. Try beating a drum in time to the pattern of the words.

## Talk about it

What is this poem describing?

A kenning is a two-word image: Earth orbiter, Rock blaster.

What does each kenning tell us about the object?

## Write it

Create a list of objects (tree, whale, teacher, boat etc) and write each on a piece of paper. As a friend to pick one at random and not tell you. The friend should then write five or more kennings to describe their object. Can you guess what it is? Swap places and do the same for them.

Or... choose one of the objects for yourself and write a kenning poem of your own for fun.

Add kennings into any other type of poem — use them in place of a metaphor or even in a story as part of a description.

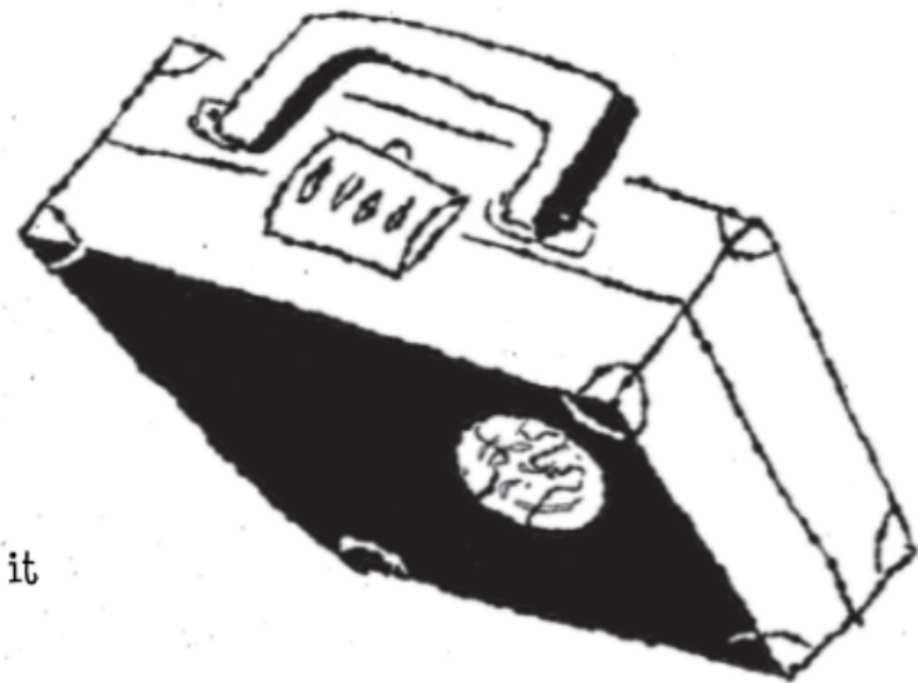


## Moon Baggage

Everything was packed:  
the air to keep them breathing on it  
the fuel to carry them to it  
the food to keep them strong for it  
the suits to keep them warm on it  
the cameras to show the world it  
and the tools to find what made it

but they also packed:  
the generations spent looking up at it  
the myths of dragons who ate it  
the hearts of lovers who met beneath it  
the brave souls who sailed by it  
the seers who said it would return  
the charts of the scientists who measured it  
the leaps in the dark to it  
the balloon rides to it

even the dreams of it  
were stowed tight until  
the spacecraft became light enough  
to fly to it.



## Say it

Perform the poem out loud. Say it slowly. Try reading it with a friend and alternate who reads which line. Can you match actions with the poem: packing a bag or how each image might be used, or both.

## Talk about it

What do you notice about the items packed in the first verse and the items packed in the second?

Why do you think the poet uses repetition?

Why do you think all these items made the spacecraft light enough to fly?

Can you add other ideas to the poem—in the style of the first verse and in the style of the second verse?

## Write it

Imagine a journey of your own. Where are you going? What kind of things will you pack? Remember the physical items and the emotional items. Think about why you want to go there. Think about who (or what) you might be going there to see. Think about your final verse—do you need to be light? Perhaps you need to be strong, or happy enough to get there?



## The Way

do not begin to celebrate  
when the full Moon lights the way

the darkest sky and the new moon  
marks the difficult path to take along the way

the voice of knowledge will be quiet  
so listen and your heart will lead the way

earn your reward by waiting  
for when Earth's shadow blocks the way

say 'Eid Mubarak' and rejoice  
this is the way to show the way

## Say it

Perform the poem out loud. Pause after each verse and give yourself (and others) time to think about what you've just said. If you feel comfortable, try using gestures to help perform the poem (like wagging your finger or shaking your head or creating a circle in the air).

## Talk about it

What do you notice about each verse?

This poem is written using a style called a 'ghazal'.

Find out what a new moon is and how it is different to a full moon.

Research and talk about 'Eid Mubarak'.

## Write it

Write your own ghazal or add more verses to this one. A ghazal should have at least five verses and each must end with the same word or phrase. You could write about Easter (the date of which is also linked to the moon), or Christmas, or a summer holiday. Maybe you could use lines you wrote for 'Moon Baggage'.



# We hope you enjoy exploring this resource

If you use these ideas, we'd love to know how. Why not share your work with us by tagging [@TroikaBooks](https://twitter.com/TroikaBooks) on Twitter

This book can be purchased from [www.troikabooks.com/this-rock-that-rock](http://www.troikabooks.com/this-rock-that-rock)



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This resource is based on a model developed by Manchester Children's Book Festival and Manchester Poetry Library at Manchester Metropolitan University. Text & design: Dom Conlon.