

Title: <i>A Few Beautiful Minutes: Experiencing a Solar Eclipse</i>	Author: Kate Allen Fox
Genre/Unit: Informational	Warm Up: <i>Moon's Turn to Be a Star</i> - Laura Purdie Salas

For a “few beautiful minutes, we get to observe the whole world change. While chock full of scientific information, the book has an accessible tone. My only complaint is that a few illustrations have the characters viewing the eclipse without eye protection - even though the back matter gives directions on how to build a sun viewer. The next total solar eclipse will occur in North America on **April 8th**. According to the author's notes, this only happens about once every 400 years in the same place. Don't miss it!

Vocabulary***

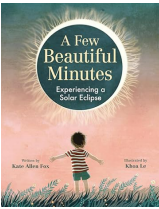
This book has **many** Tier 2 and 3 words! I have chosen just five to teach explicitly. I have listed all the words that popped out to me in the Extensions section. You can revise my teaching list as you see fit depending on the age level of the child listening to the read aloud. See our blog for tips on word selection.

Tier 2 Word	Page	Student Friendly Definition (kids.wordsmyth.net, collinsdictionary.com, ldoceonline.com)
transform	12	to change the form, appearance, or structure of
anticipation	15	expectation or hope
grasp	18	to understand fully or deeply; also to take hold
captivated	18	to charm or fascinate; to capture and hold the attention and interest of
precious	19, 20	of great worth or value; beloved or cherished

Warm Up Poem:

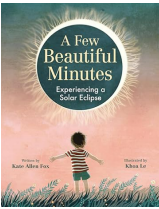


By Laura Purdie Salas



Reading

Page #	Accountable Talk Vocabulary, comprehension strategies, think alouds, and student talk. Words in red appear in the text, but are not explicitly taught. Define as needed.	JOYcabulary Getting students to own their words: speaking, reading, and writing.
Before Reading	Let's study the covers. It seems like the boy is spreading his arms wide to take in the vast sky. On the back cover, everyone's face is lifted to the sky. Let's collect what we know (and what we <i>think</i> we know) about a solar eclipse. How can the front cover help us? The title? (Gather all ideas for now. You can correct any misconceptions after reading.)	
During Reading P. 1-3	Even the animals are looking up! Hmm... so a total solar eclipse is rare , it doesn't happen very often. And it is an illusion ? I guess the sun doesn't really vanish . It just looks that way... for a few minutes.	
P. 4 - 11	The author describes this event as if it was a stage performance . Why would she do that? I notice on page 7 that the children are building something. Anyone have an idea of what that might be? (If not, explain.) Refer to illustration on page 8.	
P.12 - 21	Notice how the author slows down time to show the slow change. Also notice how people from different places are captivated by the event. (Again - Be sure to emphasize the importance of NOT looking directly at the sun!)	anticipation grasp captivate precious
P. 22 - 29	Keeping with the metaphor of a performance , the sun reemerges and reclaims "her daytime throne." (Might want to pop out the prefix re-) Notice how the author speeds up time here, even though the sun's return is actually gradual. Why do you suppose she does that?	glimpse
P. 30 - 33	Be sure to read these pages! You may wish to create an actual timeline with your class and/or build sun viewers to get ready for April's show.	
After Reading	Return to certain pages to discuss the content and build knowledge. For example, return to page 9 to discuss the crescent-shaped shadows.	



Extensions

- Write a shape poem about stars, the sun, or the moon:



More books on eclipses and shadows: build knowledge

- Someone is Eating the Sun* - Sonneborn & Gurney
- The Big Eclipse* - Coffelt
- Eclipses* - Hunter
- What Makes a Shadow* - Dorros
- Moonbear's Shadow* - Asch

Other titles you may enjoy:

- Who Is Neil deGrasse Tyson* - Pam Pollack and Meg Belviso
A biography of the most well-known astrophysicist in the world and the director of the Hayden Planetarium in New York City.
- The Stuff of Stars* - Marion Dane Bauer (winner of the Coretta Scott King Award)
"Poetic language and dazzling illustrations link the big bang to a child's birth..."
School Library Journal

Tier Two Words	Tier Three Words
illusion	universe
endless	dawn
expanse	crescent
vast	sphere
vibrant	twilight
silhouette	horizon
eerie	carona
plummet	atmosphere
panorama	roost

- Play shadow games. Create shadow puppets.