



Aidan's First Full Moon Circle Written and Illustrated by W. Lyon Martin

A young boy attends his first public spiritual celebration, a circle to honor the full Moon while Seamus the Squirrel gathers acorns for the winter. The illustrations incorporate pictures of acorns for the reader to count and find.

This guide includes discussion questions and projects appropriate for book clubs, literature circles, library, home and classroom discussions. It is intended to provoke thought and insight into the subject and themes of this book including an understanding of Pagan spirituality.

About the author/illustrator

Author/illustrator of *An Ordinary Girl*, *A Magical Child* and *Aidan's First Full Moon Circle*, W. Lyon Martin has followed a Pagan path all her adult life. An Eclectic witch living in Eastern Missouri, she has written articles for Craft publications both on-line and in print including *PanGaia*, *Broomstix*, *The Seeker Journal*, *NewWitch*, *Acorns Journal*, *Elements Magazine*, *Crescent Magazine*, *The Witch's Voice* and *The Pagan-Wiccan Times*. She has been a working artist since 1981, when she received an Associate of Applied Science degree from the Fashion Institute of Technology. She continued her training at the School of Visual Arts where she received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1988. She has exhibited her watercolor paintings in art shows internationally, and her fine art paintings grace both public and private collections. Lyon's Craft website, [Magickware](http://www.magickware.com) is geared toward unique handmade gifts, quality ritual supplies and fine art for the Pagan home. She lives with her husband, her daughter and two cranky cats of undetermined ancestry.

Pre-reading Activity

Give each child a blank piece of paper or have them open to a clean page if they are using a writing journal. Ask them if they have ever been excited or nervous about going to a new place, or trying something new. Have them write about it or draw pictures to express their experiences. Share.

Questions for Discussion

- Why is Aidan nervous about attending the Circle with the Coven? (predictive question)
- What role does drumming play in the Circle and ritual?
- Why does Aidan think that he has done something wrong? (predictive question)
- What other things could Aidan have done to make himself more comfortable casting the circle?
- Each Full Moon of the year has a special name (January: Wolf Moon, February: Snow Moon, March: Worm Moon, April: Pink Moon, May: Flower Moon, June: Strawberry Moon, July: Buck Moon, August: Sturgeon Moon, September: Harvest Moon, October: Hunter's Moon, November: Beaver Moon, December Cold Moon) Discuss the meaning and history of moon names (<http://obs.nineplanets.org/psc/fullmoons.html>). As students what they would call the moon of the month they are currently in. Draw or write in journal and discuss and share.
- Why does Aidan cast the circle in a clockwise direction. What would moving the staff in a counterclockwise direction do?
- What do you know North, South, East and West to mean? How is it different in this story? How is it the same (the same concept can be applied to "circle" and "element"--see vocabulary words)?
- Why do Aidan and the Coven members place their hands on the ground after the energy release? What do you think they are trying to do?
- At the end of the story, Aidan sees a deer and fawn in the woods. Look at the illustration that accompanies this part of the story. After he splashes his face and opens his eyes, the animals are gone,

but Aidan says that he has seen a goddess—the Divine/God in female form. Do you think that he has? Why or why not?

- The Full Moon Circle is a religious/spiritual event for Aidan. How is it similar to your religious/spiritual practices? How is it different?

Projects Across the Curriculum

Language Arts

Vocabulary words (can be found in the back of the book). Define and discuss (how are the meanings of some of the words in the story different from the meanings that you know?): circle, cast circle, coven, earth power, elements, harvest moon, high priestess, release, ritual, wicca/wiccan, ley lines, clockwise.

Personification. Define personification (a figure of speech that gives an inanimate object or abstract idea human traits and qualities, such as emotions, desires, sensations, physical gestures and speech). When Aidan arrives at the site for the circle, he thinks “the tree branches mimicked hands reaching for the sky.” Take students on a nature walk. Have them apply personification to natural objects that they find. Write or draw observations in a writing journal.

Music

Drumming was part of the ritual that Aidan attended. Have the students sit in a circle. Pass a hand drum around and have each student tap out a beat. Discuss the sounds and rhythms? What do they inspire or make you visualize?

Art

Aidan's First Full Moon Circle is actually two stories in one. There is Aidan's experience, and there is also that of Seamus the squirrel who is storing nuts for the winter. W. Lyon Martin incorporated pictures of acorns into the illustrations of Aidan's story as a find and seek activity. Have students choose an object, then create an illustration from a favorite story embedding/incorporating images of the object into it. Use illustrations from Aidan's First Full Moon Circle as a model.

Math

Find and count the acorns hidden in each picture. Add the totals of each illustration together to get a grand total.

Science

Discuss the phases of the moon and how they effect life on earth. Track the moon's phases by making a moon phase magnet (<http://broomstix.blogspot.com/2013/06/full-moon-on-sunday-make-moon-phase.html>).

*by Natalie Zaman
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