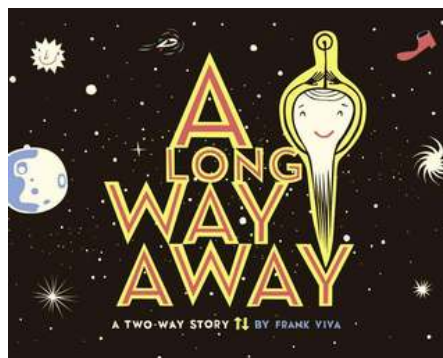




A Long Way Away

Frank Viva (Visual Art)

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In the first reading experience of its kind, blast off on a journey through twenty-six feet of continuous vertical art, which reads beautifully no matter which cover you start from. Begin at one end, and you're on the ocean floor; follow a creature along a bright yellow trail up into deep space to his alien family's embrace. Or, start from the other end and follow an alien floating down into the depths of the ocean to rest. Whether journeying home or heading to bed, enjoy a satisfying and surprising trip from rising star Frank Viva.

A Long Way Away Details

Date : Published April 2nd 2013 by Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

ISBN : 9780316221962

Author : Frank Viva (Visual Art)

Format : Hardcover 40 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Space, Fiction

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From Reader Review A Long Way Away for online ebook

Beth Kakuma-Depew says

The art is experiential but super-cute. My co-worker who's a Hello Kitty fan gave it her coo-ing seal of approval! But I'm not sure how I feel about the story...or lack of story. It just sort of ends, with the little guy falling asleep on a ledge in the ocean. Why did he have to journey all the way to Earth's oceans? Maybe if he found some sort of long lost friend at the end, one that's only hinted at in the beginning. I will have to test this one out on my boys.

Kelly says

Very clever. Viva writes a book (physically that needs to be held at a 90-degree angle - up and down - instead of the typical left to right) that can be read forward and backward. I love the choice he made for the illustrations...akin to someone traveling through space.

mauvemagnolia says

Upon first impressions, I didn't really understand this book. The art is very bright and 'story' difficult to follow. But after reading it the other direction I think it will grow on me. Very interpretive. Much more about the art itself then about a cohesive story. Each 2-page spread has its own phrase (or series of phrases) that combine with the illustration create a snapshot along a journey, and it's up to the readers to interpret and put it all together. Were I to describe this book in one word, it would be 'interesting'. Take your time with this one.

Melissa says

An enjoyable vertical counterpoint to the horizontal Along a Long Road. More awesome illustrations & design. I like that you can read it bottom-to-top either a line at a time, starting from the lower edge and going up, OR reading a spread at a time, reading a whole page from top-to-bottom, then flipping the page down and reading the next page top-to-bottom. I like that either journey ends well. I also like exploring distance along a height/depth axis since we spend so much time thinking about length.

Edith Betancourt says

A long way away is a less worded book and the style of the book is different which is quite amazing to see a different format. What this book is about is taking you up or down (depending where you start) and seeing how it is from the sea to space while having words throughout to explain what is going on during the adventure.

Visually this book is very fun and although it is limited in color, the colors represented are bright and work nicely with the story. The colors complement each other nicely. This was a fun book to read on the side and

The visual art in this short Sci-fi makes it an awesome intro to science, space and geography. The language is limited but writing is not as needed for this broad yet simply concept. I love the reversibility of it!

What do you call words that read the same forward and backward? A palindrome, right? Well, this story is a palindrome story, if that's a phrase. Alien to earth to undersea creature? Or undersea creature to earth to alien? It can be either. Or both. A fun read either way with beautiful blue, red, yellow, and black illustrations.

Another reviewer here on Goodreads called this book a piece of "vertical art," and once I had that concept in mind, I found it a little easier to understand what the book is trying to do. It's a reversible story, which travels from down under the sea all the way up into space (or vice versa, depending on which direction you read in). The pictures are eye-catching, but it's hard to make sense of what is happening and my three-year-old (who, admittedly, is probably not the intended audience) was totally confused and bored as I read it aloud. I think a school-age audience would probably get more out of it, especially in a group setting where they can brainstorm together about the meaning of the text and pictures.

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This unique book can be read two different ways, both of them fascinating. Read from the first page, this book takes readers from way out in outer space way down to the ocean's depths. Read from the back, readers move up the ocean, past various scenes on earth, and way out into somewhere else in the universe. I was particularly intrigued with how scenes that I associated with space travel and aliens when reading the story from one perspective changed and seemed associated with sea life when I read it from the other direction. The 26-foot-long piece of art, filled with vivid colors and a yellow line running through its entirety, was created with Adobe Illustrator. I like this more each time I read it.

Shelli says

A Long Way Away gets 5 stars for originality! Of the thousands of picture books I have read over the years I don't think I have read anything quite like it. A beam of light? A meteor? Some strange alien life form? (not sure what exactly the smiley little cartoon character is) is speeding down, down, down from a distant planet. Along the way the readers ride along on the exciting trip around, over and under numerous things. Until it finally arrives at its destination – some shelf near the bottom of the Earth's ocean. The story can then be flipped over and retold in reverse, now journeying up, up, up and ending at that distant planet.

If it were not for the unique story layout the book would just be a nice read to share with any kindergarten age student or younger when teaching about placement of objects in relation to others. The out-of-the-box way of presenting this simple story however makes for a great book even for older children, for inspiration in art and storytelling.

Jen says

While I admire the author/illustrator for creating a "two-way" book, this book was not a good two-way book for me, nor do I quite understand how a child would enjoy it. When read from ocean to space, it's a great story, with the little alien finding his family in space. But when read from space to ocean, it's just sad: I had hoped the little alien would find a new family - of squid, since he resembles a squid - in a sort of visit-the-grandparents storyline. Instead, though, he just fell "deep asleep," all alone. I thought this version of the story to be rather dismal, so I didn't enjoy it and I don't see how kids would, either.

The artwork was fun, though, and I did enjoy tracing the line from start to finish (in both directions).

Shannon says

It's possible I've been entirely too spoiled by witty two-way books like Marilyn Singer's *MIRROR MIRROR*, but this book wasn't terribly compelling for me. The retro art was right up my alley of course, but I can't think of a way to use this in my class, other than maybe to talk about prepositional phrases? Or maybe tied in to a Jacques Cousteau study?

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Bethe says

Intriguing concept, up or down, the kids will enjoy reading this book about a space creature, or is it a jellyfish? Bright, approaching neon, colors complement the setting and continue the story on both covers. Almost wish it wasn't bound so I could see it as it was first imagined as one long continuous piece of art.

Rebecca says

Very cool! Read it as a journey down, or a journey up -- either way, it's a 26-foot piece of art!
