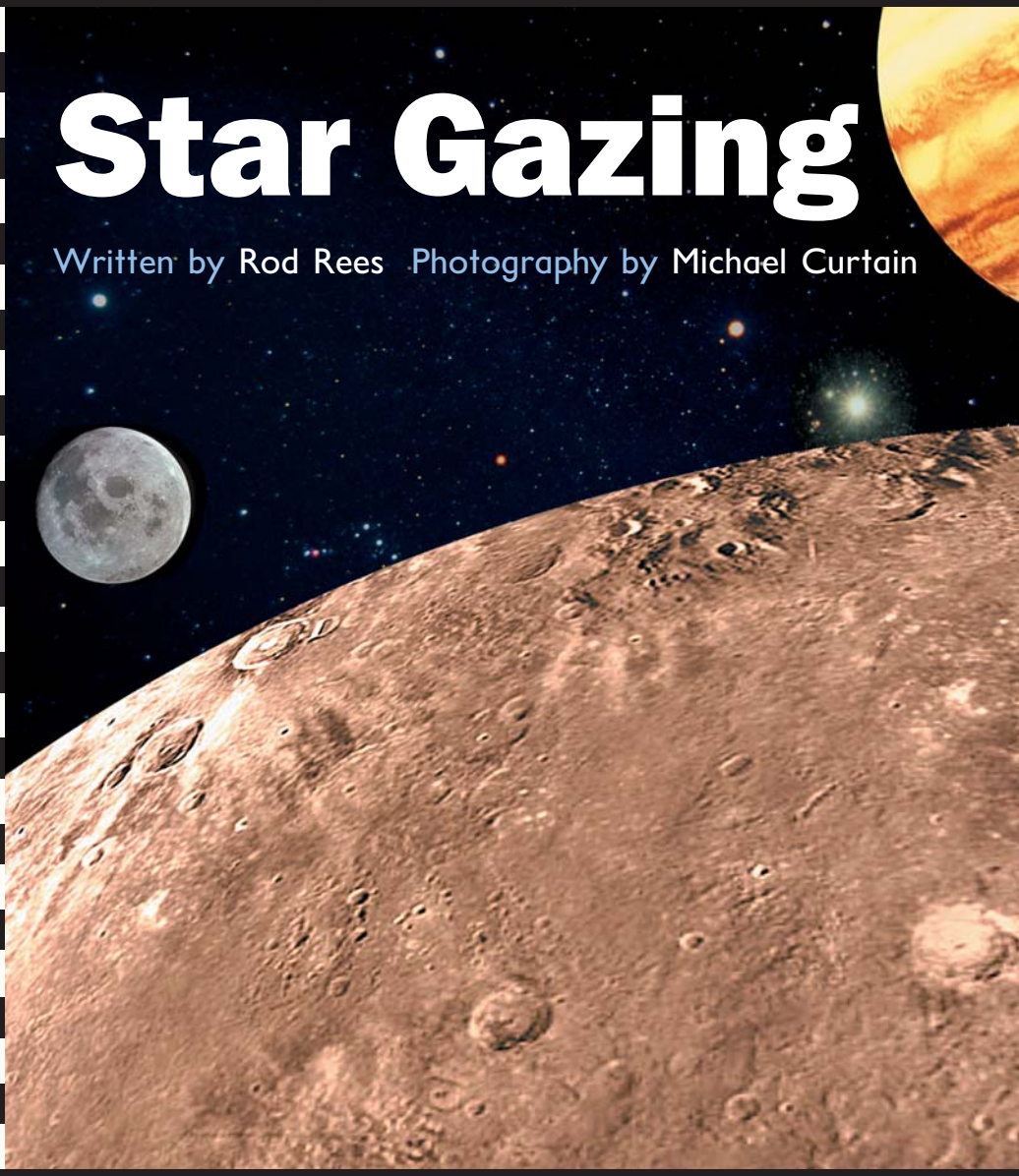
Teacher Edition

AlphaWorld

Star Gazing

Written by Rod Rees Photography by Michael Curtain



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How to use this book

The AlphaWorld teacher editions support teachers as they guide children's reading and thinking during one or more guided reading sessions. Teachers can observe children as they read and choose from the given suggestions to suit individual needs.

Before reading

Setting the context, front cover and title page:

The suggestions help teachers to set the scene and prepare children for reading the book. Prompts help to determine children's prior knowledge. Where necessary, background information is provided. Teachers are encouraged to check that children understand the vocabulary listed and to discuss the meanings and/or the structures of these words. Previous experiences with similar text types may also be discussed.

During reading

Predict, Read, Reflect:

Questions encourage children to engage with the text by making predictions. The children then read a section of the text and reflect on what they have read. The focus is on the content, language and text features of the book.

Observe and support:

Prompts help teachers to focus on the strategies children use as they read. Teachers can then select from and adapt the suggestions according to the needs of the individual child. The suggestions aim to develop a child's reading abilities. Interruptions to the child's reading should be minimal.

After reading

A selection of reading and writing activities:

The last pages of the teacher edition provide follow-up activities and include the assessment focus.

Selected text features

- Text is written in the first person
- Captions and labels support photographs
- Maps of the major constellations

Vocabulary

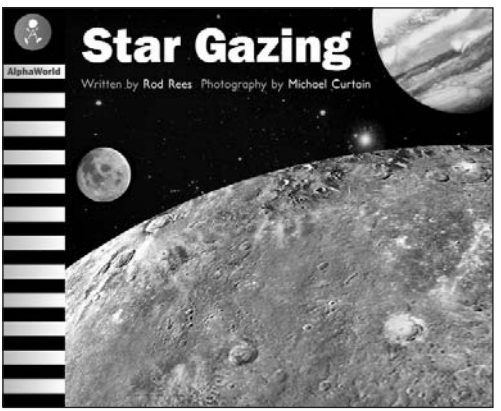
binoculars, craters, Earth, Jupiter, Mars, Milky Way, mountains, observatory, Saturn, solar system, telescopes

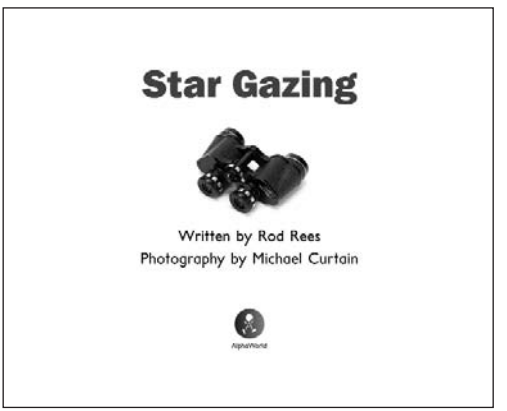
Setting the context

If possible, show the children a photograph of the night sky.
What does this photo show?
Discuss any interesting aspects of the photo.
What can you see when you look at the sky at night? Do you know any interesting information about stars and planets that you would like to share?

Background information

Our solar system is part of the Milky Way. There are nine planets in our solar system. The largest planet is Jupiter. Saturn is the second largest and has the unusual feature of being surrounded by rings. These rings are made up of small pieces of spinning ice. The difference between planets and stars can be seen through powerful telescopes. Stars twinkle and planets shine.





Front cover

Show the front cover of the book.
This book is called Star Gazing. *What does 'gazing' mean?*
What do you think this book might be about? Why?

Title page

Turn to the title page.
Point out the names of the author and the photographer.
What is on this page? Why might it be pictured here?

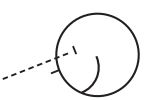
Predict

Look at the photo on page 2. Who might be with the boy? What do you think they are doing?

Read to the end of page 3.

Reflect

What is the boy's dad going to do?
Would you like to learn about the night sky? Why?



Observe and support

Ask a child to read aloud to you while the others are reading silently.
Can the child read the text with expression – as if he or she were the child in the book?
Can you read it so that it sounds like the boy is talking?
How might he feel looking at the sky with his dad?
How might his voice sound?

One night Dad and I went outside to look at the sky.

It was very dark and we could see lots of twinkling stars and the bright shining moon.

Dad said he would teach me about the night sky.

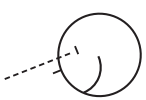
Predict

They looked through the binoculars at the night sky. What might be better to use than binoculars? Why?

Read to the end of page 5.

Reflect

What is the name of a place where people look at the night sky through telescopes?
If you worked at an observatory, what would your job be?



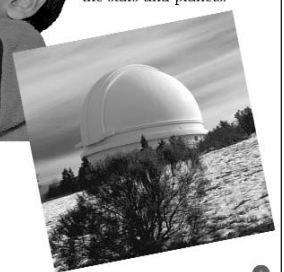
Observe and support

Can the child use information in the photographs and text to understand new vocabulary?
What is an observatory? What helped you to work that out?

We looked at the sky through Dad's binoculars. He said that binoculars were good for looking at the sky, but that telescopes were better.

Dad said we could go to a place where people look at the stars and planets through a powerful telescope.

This place is called an observatory. People who work at an observatory study the stars and planets.



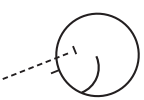
Predict

The boy and his father went to visit an old observatory near their house. They met Sandy who works at the observatory. Look at the photo. What might Sandy be doing?
Turn to page 8.
Sandy showed them the telescope she uses to look at the night sky. What does a telescope do? How do you use it?

Read to the end of page 7.

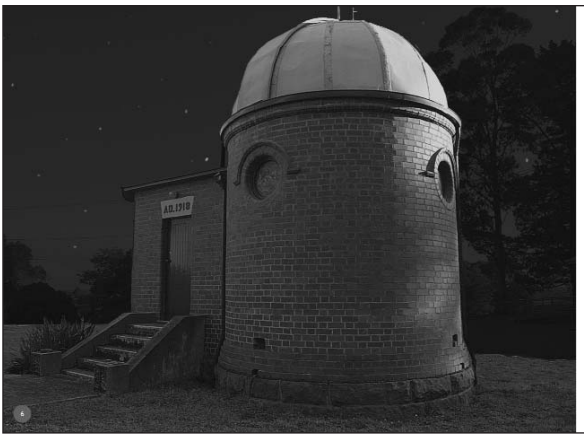
Reflect

Who is Sandy? What does she do?
Can you tell me about the photo on page 9?
Why have the labels been included?



Observe and support

Can the child understand the literal meaning of the text?
What will the boy see through the telescope? Where did you find that out?



There is a very old observatory near our house so the next night Dad and I went to visit this observatory.

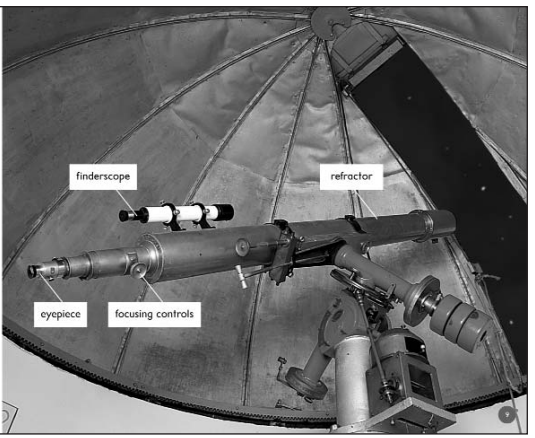
We met Sandy who works there.

Sandy's job is to learn more about the stars. Sandy told us about the night sky and explained what we would be able to see through the telescope.

Sandy showed us the telescope she uses to look at the night sky.

The telescope points up at the sky through an opening in the roof of the observatory. It makes the things in the sky look bigger. Sandy showed me how to look into the telescope.

She told me I would be able to see some stars and some planets through the telescope.



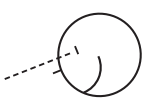
Predict

Sandy moved the telescope so that it was pointing to the moon. Why would they look at the moon first?
Turn to page 12.
The telescope can be moved around to look at different parts of the sky. Look at the photo on page 12. What would the boy be looking at now?

Read to the end of page 13.

Reflect

What is the 'solar system'?
How did Mars look different from the moon when the boy looked through the telescope?

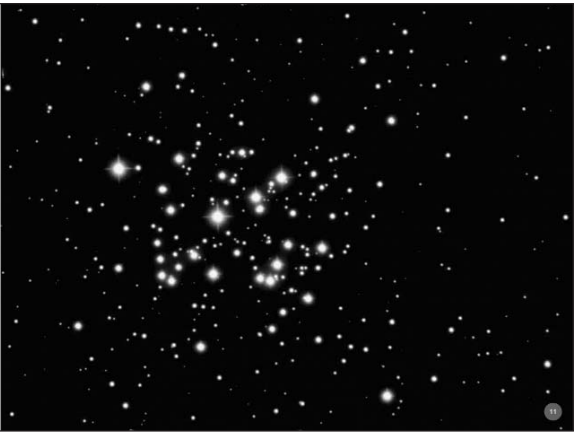


Observe and support

Can the children interpret the text?
Which is bigger – the moon or Mars? How do you know?

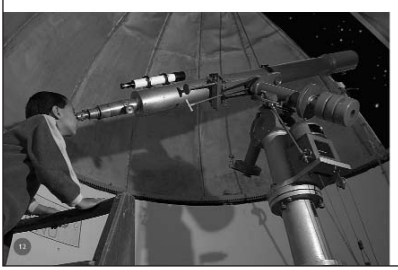
I looked through the telescope and saw hundreds of stars. Sandy explained the difference between stars and planets.

Planets are made of rock, or ice and gas. Stars are big balls of fire. The sun is a star. It looks huge because it is close to Earth. The other stars look small because they are very far away.



Then we looked at the Milky Way through the telescope.

There are billions of stars in the Milky Way. It looks amazing. Our planet Earth is also part of the Milky Way.



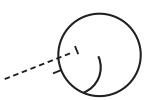
Predict

The next planet they looked at was Jupiter. What do you know about Jupiter? Look at the photos to help you.
Turn to page 16.
What other planets in the solar system could they look at? What would you want to look at? Why?

Read to the end of page 17.

Reflect

What did you find out about Jupiter?
What is special about Saturn?

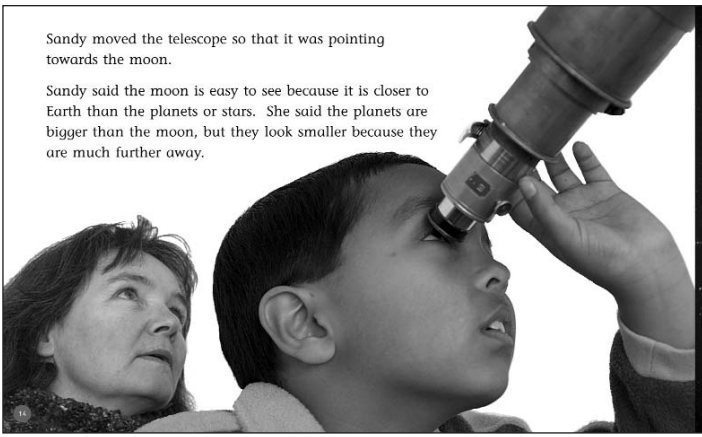


Observe and support

Can the children explain the diagram of the relative sizes of the planets on page 15?
What are these lines for? What do the labels tell us?
What does the caption say?
What does 'relative sizes' mean?
Which is the largest planet in our solar system?
Which is the smallest planet in our solar system?

Sandy moved the telescope so that it was pointing towards the moon.

Sandy said the moon is easy to see because it is closer to Earth than the planets or stars. She said the planets are bigger than the moon, but they look smaller because they are much further away.



The telescope can be moved around to look at different parts of the sky.

Sandy moved the telescope so that it was pointing towards Mars. Mars is a planet in our solar system.

Sandy told me that Mars has lots of craters and mountains. Mars looks a bit like the moon, but it is a different colour. It is called "the red planet," but it looked orange to me.

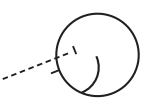
Predict

Sandy showed the boy some stars through the telescope. She explained the difference between stars and planets. What do you think the difference is?
Turn to page 20.
Look at the photo on page 21. This is what the Milky Way looks like through a telescope. What do you think the Milky Way is?

Read to the end of page 21.

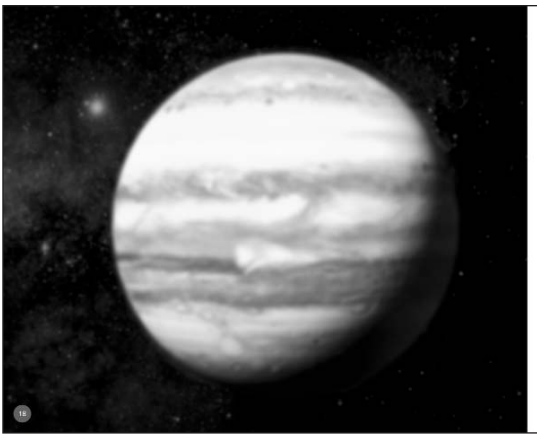
Reflect

What is the difference between stars and planets? How can you tell them apart?
Why does the sun look so huge?



Observe and support

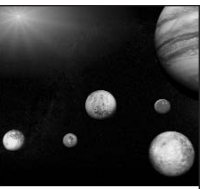
Can the child understand the inferences in the text?
What might the Milky Way be made up of? Why do you think so?

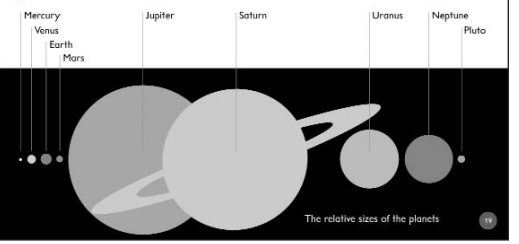


The next planet I looked at was Jupiter.

Jupiter is a huge planet and has many moons moving around it. These moons are like the moon that we see from Earth, but our planet Earth only has one moon.

Sandy told me that Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system.





The relative sizes of the planets

I looked through the telescope and found Saturn. Saturn is the second largest planet in our solar system.

Saturn has rings around it. The rings are made up of small pieces of ice and dust that spin around Saturn.

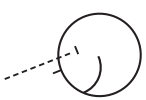
Predict

At the observatory the boy and his father saw how the moon, planets and stars look through a very powerful telescope. Do you think they enjoyed their trip to the observatory? Why?
Turn to page 24.
Discuss the maps of the major constellations in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres. Demonstrate how to read and gain information from these maps.

Read to the end of page 24.

Reflect

What did the boy like the most about his trip to the observatory? Does he want to go back again?



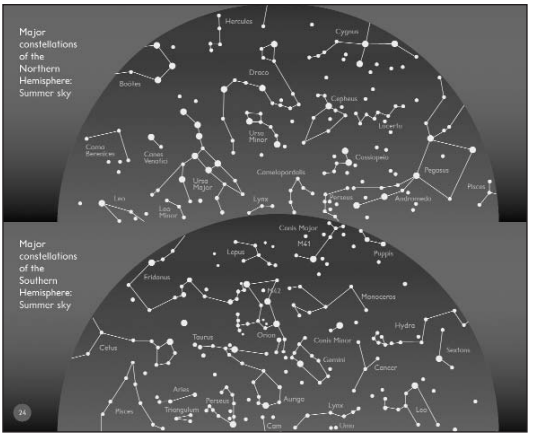
Observe and support

Do the children use a range of information to solve problems when they read?
How did you know that word was 'fantastic'? What did you think about?

Then it was time to go. I thanked Sandy for showing me around and waved goodbye. Dad said we could go back another time.

Our trip to the observatory was fantastic. I really enjoyed myself. I saw how the moon, planets and stars look through a very powerful telescope.

I hope we can go again soon.



After reading

Being a meaning maker

Encourage the children to support their answers with evidence from the book as they discuss these questions:

What is an observatory?
Why are telescopes used to look at the stars and planets?
What planets are in our solar system?
What do you know about the planets in our solar system?

Being a code breaker

Explore the following language features:

- Proper nouns: Earth, Jupiter, Mars, Milky Way, Saturn
- Identifying the number of syllables in words: plan/ets, tel/e/scope, San/dy, ob/ser/va/tory, /Earth/

Being a text user

Point out the captions, labels and pointers.

What are these called?
What do they tell us?
When do we read them?
Why do we read them?

Being a text critic

What did the author need to know to write the book? How might he have found this out?
Why did the author write this piece as a recount?
In what other ways could he have presented information about the solar system?

Responding to text

Discuss the events, in time order, that occurred in this recount. Record them on a chart. The children could illustrate one of these and attach their illustration to the chart.

Play 'Pass'. Ask the children to sit in a circle with a piece of paper each and ask them all to start writing a retelling of 'Star Gazing'. After a few minutes ask each child to pass his or her paper onto the next person. The next child has to pick up the retelling and continue writing from where the previous person left off.

Explain and demonstrate the meaning of syllables. Ask the children to clap once for each syllable that they hear. Link this to spelling by explaining that listening to each part of a word can help you to spell it.

Writing links

Discuss how you can identify that the story is told in the first person.
How do we know that the boy is telling his own story?
Model writing a recount about an interesting experience that you have had recently.

The children could write their own recounts about a recent personal experience, possibly about some interesting night time adventure that they have had.
What happened first? What happened next?

Possible assessment focus

Can the children:
- interpret information gained from the captions and labels?
- point out the features of a recount?
- explain the difference between stars and planets?

whole text activity sentence activity word activity

Star Gazing

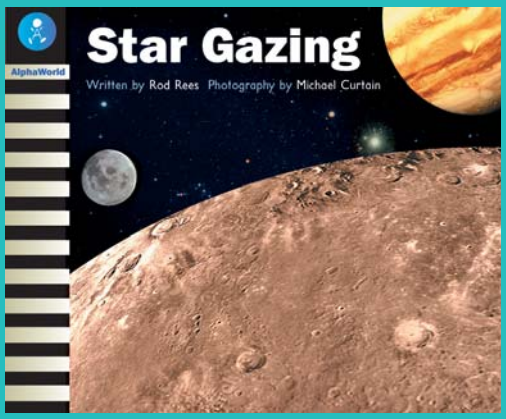
Topic: Technology/Earth/Science
Curriculum link: Earth Science
Text type: Recount
Reading level: 18
Word count: 573
Vocabulary: binoculars, craters, Earth, Jupiter, Mars, Milky Way, mountains, observatory, Saturn, solar system, telescopes

Possible literacy focus:

- Understanding the captions and labels used to support photographs.
- Identifying the features of a recount.
- Understanding the text at the literal, inferential and interpretative levels.

ESL possibilities:

- Discussing the use of comparatives and superlatives in the text: closer, largest.
- Identifying and discussing the purpose of linking words: and, because, but.



Summary

In this book, a boy tells us about visiting an observatory with his dad. He sees stars and planets through a telescope.

AlphaWorld

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