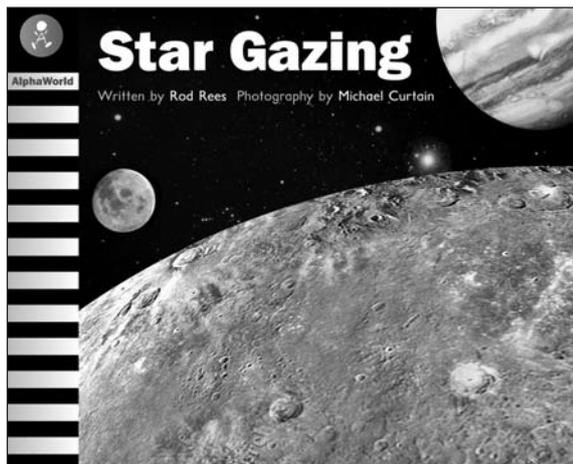


Star Gazing



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.

Follow-up activities

Star Gazing

Ask the children to look at the star chart on page 24. Discuss the major constellations that they can see on the chart. Ask the children to take the chart home and, with a parent or friend, to go outside at night and look for the different constellations. Ask the children to report back on their findings the following day. Also, plan an excursion to a planetarium. In this setting, different features of the night sky and prominent constellations can be easily explored and discussed.

Linking words

Ask the children to re-read the text on page 4. Now ask the children to find sentences where 'and' and 'but' are used. Explain to the children that these words are called conjunctions and that they join sentences and parts of sentences together.

Can you find other sentences where conjunctions are used? Why do you think we use conjunctions?

Comparatives and superlatives

Write the following sentences on the board:

The moon is easy to see because it is **closer** to Earth than the planets or stars.

Jupiter is the **largest** planet in our solar system.

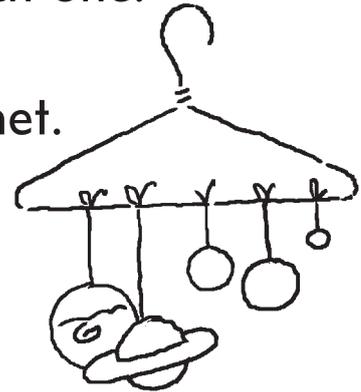
Ask the children what they know about these words. Explain that some comparative words end in 'er' and some superlative words end in 'est'. Ask the children to work in pairs and write down other words like these. They could then write some sentences about our solar system using both comparatives and superlatives and illustrate them with their own drawings.

Solar system mobile

You will need:

coathanger, string, cardboard, crayons, felt pens, pencils, sticky tape, scissors

1. Draw the planets on cardboard and colour them in.
2. Cut them out and attach string to each one.
3. Hang them from the coathanger.
4. Add labels with the name of each planet.
5. Now add a fact about each planet.
6. Display your mobile in the classroom.



More facts about our solar system

You will need:

paper, pencils, Internet access or books about space

1. Find out some extra information about our solar system.
2. Find a topic you are interested in by looking on the Internet or through some books.
3. Write a topic heading.
4. Jot down some facts about the topic.
5. Now write this information in sentences.
6. Share your information with the class.



Cloze

Write the missing words in the spaces.

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

It was _____ dark and we could see lots of
_____ stars and the bright shining
_____.

Dad said he would teach me about the night sky.

We looked at the sky _____ Dad's binoculars.

He said that binoculars were _____ for looking at
the sky, but that telescopes were better.

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

We _____ Sandy who works at the observatory.

Sandy's job is to _____ more about the stars.

Instructions Ask children to read on if they are having trouble thinking of a word that makes sense and try again. The answers do not have to be the same as in the book, as long as they make sense.

True or false

Are these statements true or false?

There are lots of mountains and craters on Mars. _____

Planets are made of rock, or ice and gas. _____

Saturn has rings around it. _____

Stars are big balls of fire. The sun is a star. _____

The Milky Way is made up of billions of planets. _____

The planets are smaller than the moon. _____

Jupiter has many moons moving around it. _____

Saturn is the largest planet in our solar system. _____

People who work at an observatory study stars and planets. _____