

- Welcome/ Introduction:** Staff/Volunteer Names
Today's Topic-Astronomy
Question: How does study of the stars and planets relate to nature?
- Ice Breaker/ Game:** **Human Solar System**-Students take on the roles of the different planets in our solar system, standing in order to scale.
- Background/ Exploration:** Describe how the tilt of the Earth as it travels its annual orbit gives us the seasons. Discuss the Solstices (summer/winter) and Equinoxes (spring/fall).
Astronomy basics-Ask the students to question each other and answer using astronomy pocket guides.
We study astronomy for knowledge about the seasons and cycles of nature. The shortening days in winter, the tides, etc. are affected by the planets and sun.
- Activity:** **Moon Walker**-Help students understand the phases of the moon.
- Activity:** **Crater formation**-Students take turns dropping different sizes and weights of marbles and balls into a container of sand or mud and studying the craters.
- OUTDOOR EXPLORATION:** Explain the parts of a telescope and the basics of how it works.
Help students take turns practicing using it for faraway objects on land.
- Activity:** Look at the sun indirectly through a telescope with a sun-viewing attachment. Look also at the moon and its craters if it is visible.
- Game:** **Asteroid Belt**
- SEND OFF:** Goodbye!
Next Month's topic-Restoration Ecology
- TAKE HOME:** parent outline
background

Vocabulary

Astronomy, solar system, equinox, solstice, orbit, crater, lunar, asteroid, Milky Way, galaxy, meteor

Background and Activity References for Naturalists and Parents

Caduto, M. J., and J. Bruchac. 1989. *Keepers of the Earth: Native American Stories and Environmental Activities for Children*. Fulcrum, Inc. Golden, CO. Pp. 111-134 Sky information and activities; p. 114 Moonwalker
Ranger Rick's Naturescope: Astronomy Adventures. 1986. National Wildlife Federation, Washington, D.C. Pp. 16-17 Pocket Guide to the Universe; background and many activities