

Grade 1

Knowledge 4

Take-Home Pages

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Knowledge 4

Reach for the Stars: Astronomy

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

1.1

Take-Home

Dear Caregiver,

Over the next few weeks, your student will be learning about astronomy. Your student will learn about the sun, the moon, the stars, and the eight planets in our solar system. Your student will also learn about space exploration, including the first astronauts to land on the moon.

In the next few days, we will focus our study of astronomy on the sun, the moon, and the stars. The most powerful way you can help support your student's learning about astronomy is to take them outside to observe the sky. Below are some suggestions for ways you can make their study of astronomy even more meaningful and fun, and some words they are learning that relate to each activity.

1. Sunrise or Sunset

Your student is learning that the earth orbits or revolves around the sun. They are also learning that even though it looks like the sun moves across the sky each day, it is actually the earth spinning on its axis that causes day and night. Go outside with your student at dawn to observe the sunrise, or at dusk to observe the sunset.

Words to use: *dusk, dawn, atmosphere, revolve, horizon*

2. Stargazing

In a few days your student will learn about the stars and the constellations. Take your student out in the evening to observe the stars. The Big and Little Dipper are part of the Big Bear constellation. They will learn to recognize the dippers and Polaris (the North Star). Together with your student, try to identify these groups of stars in the night sky. You may wish to obtain a book from the library on constellations to guide your observations.

Words to use: *constellation, star, telescope, outer space, meteor*

3. Phases of the Moon

Your student will learn about the moon and how it orbits the earth, reflecting the sun's light. They will also learn to recognize four of its phases: the new moon, the crescent moon, the half moon, and the full moon. Look for the moon every few days and talk with your student about how much of it is visible in the sky.

Words to use: *crescent, full, reflecting, orbit, craters, man in the moon*

4. Read Aloud Each Day

Reading to your student every day is very beneficial to their literacy development. At the local library, you can look for many books on astronomy and a list of books and other resources relevant to this topic.

Celebrate times when your student shares what they have been learning at school.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

6.1

Take-Home

Dear Caregiver,

Over the next few days, your student will be continuing their study of astronomy. Your student has now learned about the sun and the stars, and has begun to learn about the moon. In the next few days, our class will focus our study on space exploration and the planets in the solar system. The most powerful way you can help support your student's learning about astronomy is to continue taking them outside to observe the sky. Below are some additional suggestions for activities, and some words they are or will be learning that relate to each activity.

1. Name the Planets

Your student will be learning about the eight planets in our solar system: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. They will also learn that Pluto was once considered a planet, but in 2006 was categorized as a dwarf planet. When you were in school, you may have learned a mnemonic to remember the names of the (then) nine planets, such as "My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas." Write a new mnemonic with your student to help them remember the list of eight names above.

2. Make a Model

Work with your student to use play dough or modeling clay to create models of the sun and the planets. Lay the models on a black piece of paper, and draw chalk lines to represent orbits. Alternatively, work with your student to paint or draw a diagram of the solar system on a piece of paper.

3. Planet Earth

Your student has learned that our home, Earth, is a planet that is in constant motion. It is difficult to believe that we are living on a moving sphere when the land beneath our feet seems still and flat. Explore a globe with your student and help them understand that it represents the planet Earth. Locate the United States and other countries your student knows about. Observe how much of the planet is covered by the continents and how much is covered by the oceans.

4. Astronauts for a Day

Your student will learn about spacecraft and astronauts in the coming days. If the thought of space travel captures your student's imagination, pretend to be astronauts together. Dress up in space suits and helmets. Using furniture or boxes, assemble a spacecraft. Count down to launch, hurtle through space propelled by a rocket, and pretend to land on the moon or another planet.

5. Read Aloud Each Day

Reading to your student every day is very beneficial to their literacy development. At the local library, you can look for many books on astronomy and a list of books and other resources relevant to this topic.

Celebrate times when your student shares what they have been learning at school.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the many contributors to CKLA over the years, including:

AmplifyCKLA

Amplify staff and contributors, who have worked on this edition of CKLA as well as prior editions of CKLA. This product reflects their expertise, passion, and dedication.



The Core Knowledge Foundation, which developed the first edition of CKLA over many years. This includes Core Knowledge Foundation staff as well as countless contributors, educators, and students who field-tested CKLA and provided invaluable feedback in its development.



Educators across the country who have provided essential feedback on previous editions of CKLA, helping us to make the program better for teachers and students.

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