

Space Media Hunt

Activity Summary

Students brainstorm popular references to space or the Sun in modern culture and then make collages using magazine images or printed images. Some examples include businesses (Starbucks), sports teams (Phoenix Suns), products (*Comet* cleaner), songs (*Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*), and musicians (Bruno Mars). This activity was adapted from a youth program at the Kavli Institute for Astrophysics and Space Research at MIT: <http://epo.mit.edu/resources/ActivityBookFall2010.pdf>

- Class time: 45 minutes (30 minutes for PreK without making a collage)
- Grade level: 3-5. To modify this for PreK, omit the media collage and focus on songs, rhymes, and stories about the Sun or space. Modify this for grades K-2 by using magazines or images with known references to space or the Sun.

Learning Objectives

- All ancient and modern cultures have been influenced by space and the Sun.

Materials Needed

- Space props (i.e., box of *Starburst* candy)—see Preparation section
- Magazines and newspapers that can be cut up
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- Card stock or posterboard sheets
- White board, or large paper such as a flipchart or butcher paper
- Marker

Preparation

Collect some props (packages or magazine pictures) of modern, popular cultural images that refer to space in some way. Some examples might include a container of *Comet* cleaner, a *Starburst* box, or a *Milky Way* wrapper.

Activity

Introduce the space props and ask students: *What do you notice? What do all of these have in common? Can you think of any more popular references to space or the Sun?* Write them on the white board or paper.

Distribute the materials. Challenge students to find and cut out as many space references as they can find, then glue them onto the card stock to make a collage.

Invite students to share their collages with the group.

Lead a discussion on why we might see so many space references in popular culture. Connect to the importance of the Sun and space in ancient and modern cultures.

Explanation/Significance

From ancient to modern times, there has been fascination with space and its mysteries. There are many ancient myths about space that have stood the test of time and continue to be retold in modern times. These days, legions of scientists study space in many different capacities, while others look to the stars and planets for less scientific answers.