

International Year of Astronomy 2009

ACTIVITIES

Starry night

Display a photo or picture of Vincent van Gogh's painting *The Starry Night* (1889). Encourage students to create their own painting or collage of the night sky, then display the artworks around the classroom.

Dazzling description

Encourage the students to write a description of the night sky. Ask them to imagine they are describing the sky to someone who is blind.

Circle meeting

Invite the students to sit in a circle. Provide them with the topic 'There is life on other planets'. Go around the circle and ask the students to say 'Yes' if they agree with the topic or 'No' if they disagree. Go around the circle again, asking the students to give a reason for their answer. Next time around, ask the students to add interesting facts or to give responses to other students' answers. Remind the students there are no wrong answers and that they may pass at any time. Remind them also that only one person speaks at a time.

Halley's comet

Ask the students to work with a partner to answer the following questions.

1. How often can Halley's comet be seen?
2. When was Halley's comet first sighted?
3. Who is Halley's comet named after?
4. What is Halley's comet made of?
5. How long is Halley's comet?
6. What years has Halley's comet been seen?
7. When will Halley's comet be seen next?

Invent an alien life form

Ask the students to invent their own alien life form. Invite them to sketch their alien, labelling different parts. Provide the students with recyclable materials or modelling clay and encourage them to make a three-dimensional model of their alien life form.

How to make a telescope

Allow the students to use one of the following websites (or another one they prefer), then follow the instructions to make their own telescope:

- **http://www.funsci.com/fun3_en/tele/tele.htm** (Fun Science Gallery)
- **<http://science.howstuffworks.com/question568.htm>** (HowStuffWorks)
- **www.lightwave.soton.ac.uk/experiments/telescope/telescope.html** (Lightwave!: The light education page)
- **www.ehow.com/how_17057_make-simple-telescope.html** (eHow).

Then ask the students to write out their own procedure to make a telescope.