EXPLORE

HOW DO WE KNOW THERE ARE ROCKS IN SPACE?

SHOOTING STAR STORIES

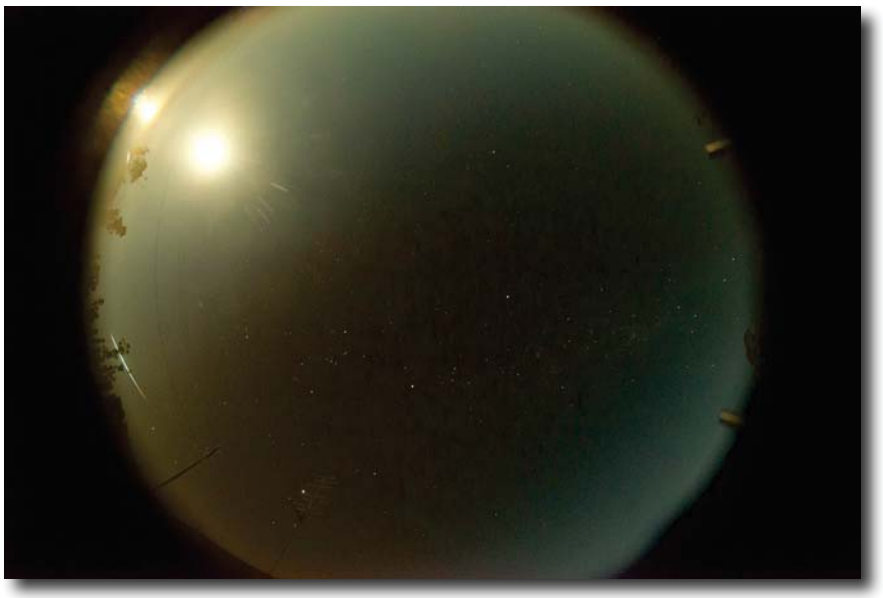
30 MINUTES AND 1 WEEK TO COLLECT STORIES

SUMMARY

In this activity students will interview their family and neighbours about their own observations of the sky: have they ever seen a shooting star?

It is unfortunate that most of us now live in cities where light pollution obscures much of the night sky. Despite this, many of us have seen a meteor, and remember it well. In any case, most of us have seen images of them in movies and on TV. By conducting interviews you'll be able to start conversations about space rocks at home and in the classroom.

Much can be learned from observing. Past Astronomers have determined the shape of the solar system, the distance to the sun, moon and planets and predicted planets and moons, just by observing.



Fireball (near horizon, left) captured by a DFN camera in Northam at dawn

OUTCOMES

1. Students share and engage in discussions about observations, asking questions and describing changes

2. Students explore the world using their senses and use drawings to represent ideas.

3. Students interview others to find out about their family or neighbour's shooting star experiences to discover observable changes in the night sky.

4. Students share their data about shooting stars with the class and discuss why their results might be different

EQUIPMENT

- Shooting Star Stories Worksheet, page 53

THE EXPERIMENT

Plan:

Students will be conducting interviews with their friends, families and neighbours to find out who has seen a shooting star. As a class, students write a list of what information they'd like to know about other people's shooting stars

Predict:

Students use the worksheet or make their own table and fill in the first line as themselves. On the second line students can predict what information they will get from their interviewees

Test:

Over the week, students take home their table and interview their family, friends, neighbours.

Analyse:

Students bring in their table and compare notes. In a teacher led discussion, find out from the class who has seen the most, least, and listen to different people's stories about shooting stars.

Communicate:

Students share the total number of shooting stars recorded by the class with their interviewees.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

- Play music, read poems and find more artwork about shooting stars. Read some picture books about shooting stars and watching the night sky
- Discuss words that could be used to describe shooting stars and contribute these to the vocabulary wall
- Have students share stories about what they have been told about shooting stars and discuss how different cultures give them great importance. Have you ever made a wish on a shooting star?
- Encourage students to ask their interviewees more than just the questions on their table. Students can find out about how it felt to see a shooting star, whether interviewees look out for them etc.
- Download the 'Fireballs in the Sky' app to find out about when the next meteor shower will be and encourage the students to watch out for it.