



Running words: 242

Book Summary

This book looks at the patterns of stars called constellations. It features the different names and stories about different constellations and how people from long ago used stars to find their way. The book also features the legend of the constellations Perseus and Andromeda.

Themes

Ancient peoples, Scientific investigation, Space

Features of the Book

- The information contained in photographs and illustrations
- Content words for discussion: *compasses, constellations, patterns, stargazers*
- Phonics and phonemic awareness: -ar (r-controlled sound /ar/)

Strategies

Stories in the Sky introduces and reinforces the following strategies:

- making connections
- visualising
- distinguishing fact from opinion

Materials

- copies of the Sentence Strips reproducible for this book, cut and ready for use
- copies of the BM, pencils

Stories in the Sky

by Diana Noonan

Introducing the Text

Begin by asking the students what they know about the stars and the night sky. Write their answers on the board or on chart paper. Ask:

- *Have you ever looked up and gazed at the night sky? What have you seen? (Answers will vary.)*

Reading the Text

Ensure each student has a copy of the text. Ensure that the content words (compasses, constellations, patterns, stargazers) are integrated naturally into the discussion. An understanding of these terms will help the students appreciate the author's purpose. Encourage the students to use the information in the illustrations and text to determine making connections, visualising and distinguishing fact from opinion in the text as you work through the book.

Cover

Together, read the book's title and the name of the author. Point out the images.

- *What is the boy looking up at? (the stars in the sky)*
- *What is drawn onto the photograph? (a lion)*

Say *Let's find out more about things that appear in the night sky.*

Contents Page

Point to the picture. Ask the students what animal they can see. (peacock) Point out the white line that joins the stars on the peacock. Ask the students if they have ever seen any star patterns in the sky. With the students, read the three subheadings on the Contents page.

Page 2

Point to the telescope in the picture.

- *A telescope helps you look at the night sky. What does it do? (It makes things in the distance seem larger and closer.)* Read the heading and text with the students. Then read the caption to

the students. Explain that Galileo Galilei's telescope was the first to be used for space observation.

Page 3

- *Look at the illustration. What animal do you see? (lion)*

Tell the students that long ago stargazers noticed that some stars were in patterns, so they gave the patterns names. Talk about the word "stargazer". Explain that "gaze" means "to look", so the meaning of "stargazer" is a person who looks at or studies the stars. Together, read the text and caption.

Page 4

- *Look at the illustration. What is the man holding in both hands? (a club and a lion) What do you think he might be? (a hunter)*

Read the body copy text and caption with the students. Talk about how the people from ancient Greece might have visualised a hunter because in ancient times many people hunted for their food. Talk about how today people might have visualised a different image when they looked at that pattern of stars.

Page 5

Read the labels *Perseus* and *Andromeda* to the students. Explain that these names are from ancient Greece and that these two feature in a Greek legend. Read the text to the students. Talk about whether any of the students have heard of *Perseus* and *Andromeda*, or seen their constellations in the sky. Explain that legends are based on fact, but they are not entirely true. Discuss fact and opinion. Tell the students that a fact is something that can be proved. An opinion is what someone thinks or feels. Ask the students to identify two opinions in the legend on page 5. (*Perseus was brave; Andromeda was beautiful.*)

Pages 6 to 7

Have the students look at the outline of the bear and its tail in the picture.

Stories in the Sky

Ask the students to trace the outline of the pot with their finger. Ask if they have ever seen this star pattern, which looks like a pot, in the night sky. Together, read the text and caption on page 6. Ask the students if they know what the pot is called in Australia and New Zealand? (prior knowledge: the Big Dipper)

Have the students look at page 7. Read the caption at the top of the page and confirm that the name for the pot in Australia and New Zealand is the Big Dipper. Then read the other two captions.

Page 8

- *Has anyone ever seen this constellation in the sky? What animal do you see?* (dragon)

Have the students look at the stars and white lines and have them visualise another animal that fits this star pattern. (Answers will vary, but could include a serpent.)

Read the body copy text together. Re-read the boldface words (Northern Hemisphere). Have the students turn to the glossary on page 12, find “Northern Hemisphere” and read its definition (the part of the world north of the equator). Explain that the equator is the imaginary line drawn around the middle of Earth and is an equal distance between the North Pole and South Pole. Show the students the equator and the Northern and Southern hemispheres on a map or a globe.

Page 9

Point out the illustration of the peacock and read the caption to the students.

- *Has anyone ever seen this constellation?*

Read the text with the students. Explain to the students that people in Australia and New Zealand live in the Southern Hemisphere. Ask them for a definition of the Southern Hemisphere based on what they learned on page 8 (the part of the world south of the equator).

Page 10

- *What are the people in the illustration doing?* (using the stars to navigate)
- *How do people find their way today?* (compasses and GPS devices)

Talk about how long ago people didn’t have compasses and GPS devices to navigate on long journeys, so they used the stars to help them. Explain how compasses show you which way is North, South, West and East and how GPS devices show your position on a map.

Together, read the text. Then have the students turn to page 12 and read the boldface words (*compass* and *GPS*) and their definitions.

Page 11

Together, discuss the photograph of the girl and man looking at the stars with a telescope. Talk about how vast space is and that there are still many stars and other space objects that have not been discovered yet. Together, read the text.

Page 12

Write the glossary words on the board or on chart paper, but out of alphabetical order. Ask the students which word would first appear in the glossary. Remind the students that a glossary is presented in alphabetical order. Work through the four words and put them in the correct order. Then have the students give, in their own words, a definition for each of the four glossary entries.

Revisiting the Text

- Revisit the caption about the Big Dipper on page 7. Have the students write three facts about it using the book to help them. They could also find two extra facts using the Internet.
- Write the word “star” on the board or on chart paper. Underline the letters *-ar*. Explain that when a *i* is followed by *r*, it usually makes the sound you hear in the word “star”.

Work with the students to list other r-controlled *-ar* words from the book (*stargazers, are, part, darker*). Encourage the students to list other r-controlled *-ar* words that they know (*Mars, bark, shark, barn, arm, car, chart, cart, dark, scarf, spark, etc.*).

Following Up

- Ask the students to re-read page 5. Encourage them to write their own legend about Perseus and Andromeda. Have the students use fact and opinion in their legends.
- Give the students copies of the BM for this title. They can write a name and story about the constellation they see.