

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Activity: Reach for the stars

Combining movement, curiosity and imagination this exciting adventure activity explores the concept of stars and introduces children to the wonders of the night sky.

Learning aims

- Understanding the world – learning about stars and their presence in the night sky
- Motor skills – running, jumping, stretching, climbing
- Imagination and creativity.

Resources

- Star shapes (these could be ready-made or created as an activity with the children beforehand), ideally a selection of different sizes
- Torches and/or pretend telescope (cardboard tube)
- Large sheet of black or dark blue paper (or a sheet of paper previously painted by the children)
- Glue
- Outdoor space
- Pictures of constellations (examples can be found on the internet; look for simple ones such as Pegasus and Ursa Major).



Activity outline

1. Prior to the activity, hide the stars around the outdoor space
2. Gather the children and discuss stars – ask what they have seen, where and when, e.g. a big one outside their bedroom window at bedtime. Explore what the children they may be made from. Explain that stars are balls of hot, explosive gas that make their own light and heat energy or search for information in books and online. Some of our stars are other planets, like planet earth. The brightest stars form pictures in the sky, called constellations. Share pictures of constellations and see if they can see the shapes, for example, of a horse (Pegasus) or a great bear (Ursa Major). Ask where the children think the stars are during the day? Explain that they are in the sky, but we can't see them because there is too much light. Briefly discuss that people can look more closely at stars at night by using a telescope – if required, explain what one is, show a picture and ideally have a real example

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3. Let the children know that they are going to be space explorers searching for stars. If they wish, children can choose a torch or a pretend telescope to search for the stars. Encourage the children to look high and low, to stretch and climb to reach the stars
4. Once the children have found a star, encourage them to go to the paper 'night sky' and stick them on. Encourage children to think about where their star will go, or whether they will use their star along with others to create and name a new constellation.

Extension ideas:

- Using some thick, dark fabric with glow-in-the-dark stars attached, create a dark space and create a cosy corner; add torches or light sticks
- Read stories or watch videos about stars and space such as 'How to catch a star' by Oliver Jeffers.

NDNA products to support you with this activity:

- [Your Essential Guide to Outdoor Play](#) - publication