



FULL-CIRCLE  
LEARNING



## Writing and Astronomy

## You Are Not Alone

Grades 4-12

### Objective:

- Learners find comfort in:
- Sensing that the beauty of the night sky that unites all
  - Reflecting on cherished memories as they gaze at the sky
  - Learning about astronomy
  - Reading and writing poems or stories

### Timing: 1 1/2 hour

- 30 minutes of theory
- 1 hour of practice

### Resources

- <https://youtu.be/YcifWcSgq4A>
- Reading material
- Paper and pencil

### Student, Teacher or Caregiver:

- Reads about the nature and history of constellations
- Reads sample poems and hears a reading by students
- Writes poems about the impact of coronavirus and ways to unite to overcome those impacts

The poetry was offered by Alagie Ndow. The video was performed by Mariama Jadama and Anna Y. Njie



## **Studying the Night Sky**

Everyone in the world has something in common. We all go to sleep under the same night sky. Do you have a favorite star or planet—one that appears in the same place most nights?

Over many centuries, people in different parts of the world have seen shapes in the patterns of the stars. They have grouped those patterns into constellations and created stories about them. Of the 50 best known constellations, many received their names centuries ago, when people first used the stars to explain what they could not understand about science.

The star patterns appear to be made of celestial bodies that remain in the same place, but each star is far from the other and varies in size, age and brightness. Some are younger stars than others. Astronomers use powerful telescopes to study the night sky and to see details within each constellation.

Looking at the night sky, everyone at the same latitude--such as those living near the equator--sees the same constellations, but if you travel to a different longitude, toward the North Pole or the South Pole, you may not see the star patterns seen by stargazers at the equator. You will also notice that the constellations change with the seasons. A star that appeared in one area may shift to another as the earth turns.

## **Uniting Our Stories of the Sky**

Distant cultures each created their own unique stories about the constellations. The Incas saw foxes and llamas in the sky. The Chinese saw a tortoise and a dragon. Those from Rome and the Middle East saw rams or eagles or water carriers.

What do you see from where you live? What stories do your stars suggest to you? Look up on a cloudless night and tell a comforting story about the stars.

## Writing Assignments

1. Writing for a sense of unity and calm:

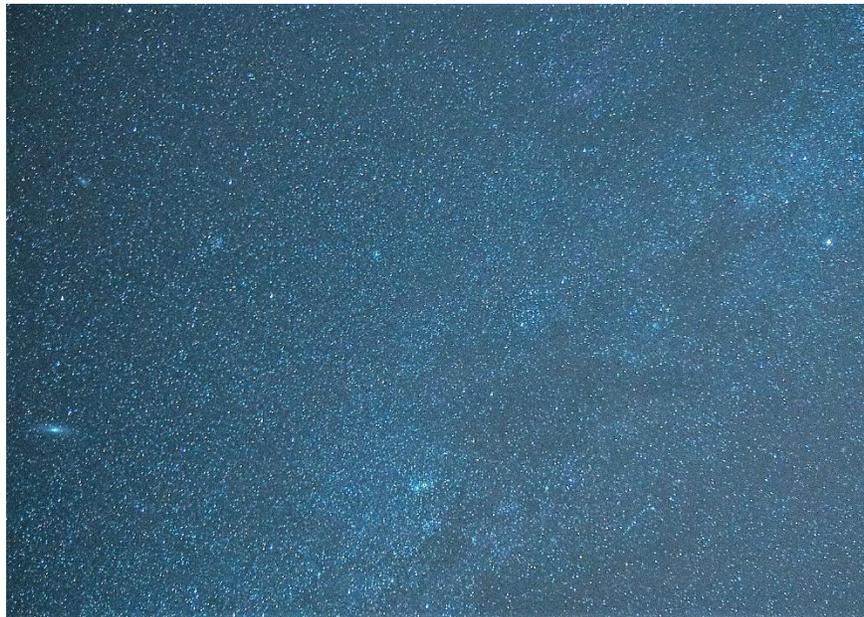
Read the following poem, “A moment with your loved ones,” by Alagaie Ndow.

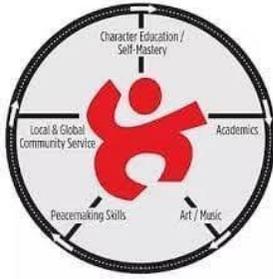
Study the night sky tonight, or think of the last time you did so. Think of other objects in nature that make you feel grateful to be alive. Write a poem inspiring people to feel as one with the sky or to feel comforted by the natural world. Create a sense of unity as you share your poems together with others.

2. Writing for a sense of unity through advocacy:

In the second poem, Mr. NDow takes a direct approach to poetry. He uses it to guide people to prevent outbreaks of the coronavirus. Two students created a video, inspired to perform the poem for you. Enjoy watching their performance at <https://youtu.be/YcifWcSgg4A>.

Write a poem that guides or inspires people to unite to prevail over the impacts of the pandemic. Share your poem with others.





**A moment alone or with your loved ones**

**As the moon brightening the night,**

**the stars spark up the world like shining diamonds.**

**Feel the light in your heart and light up your mind while you are at home.**

**If you're anxious that people have been asked to stay home,**

**Take comfort in knowing you are not alone.**

**Tonight, you are blessed with a star, wherever you are,**

**Gaze up at the sky and pick out a star.**

**A moment alone or with your loved ones,**

**We all share the beautiful sky high above.**

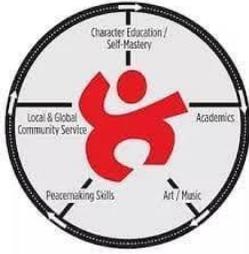
**Take 30 seconds, be still in your mind;**

**Reflect on a happy, most memorable time.**

**The littlest things can give hearts a lift;**

**If we pause, take a moment, and cherish our gifts.**

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## **Be hopeful**

**Avoid shaking hands.  
avoid touching your face.**

**Keep distance from a crowded place.**

**A virus is amongst us, roaming around our communities**

**Infecting our love once.  
It contaminates and does us harm  
By the simple touch of our hands.**

**In days of uncertainty and global health problems we are experiencing today .  
We have to be aware.  
Hygiene is our only shield  
To this virus who waits out there.**

**A mysterious pest is silently killing us,  
Mother earth is now at war  
With an enemy that's unseen.  
Be hopeful we will beat the invader  
If we all keep on fighting using the bullets from the health experts.  
Stay hygienic, be safe, keep physical distancing, be with your self,  
and be hopeful.**

<https://youtu.be/YcifWcSgq4A>

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