Night Sky

The night sky has always been a wonder. For thousands of years, people have watched the moon, stars, and planets. They told stories about them. They used the stars for directions when they traveled.

The moon is the brightest object in the night sky. The sun makes it bright. The moon moves around earth in a path, or orbit. Each orbit takes a little over twenty-seven days.

As the moon moves, the part we see lit by the sun changes. These changes are called the moon’s phases. Some phases are new moon, first quarter, full moon, and last quarter.

Then sun makes some planets bright, too. The brightest are Venus, Mercury, and Saturn. Often they appear on Earth’s horizon at dawn or dusk. They are sometimes mistaken for stars.

Some objects seem to fly across the night sky. Meteors look like bursts of light. Some people call them “shooting starts.” Really, they are small rocks from space. They burn up in Earth’s atmosphere.

Astronomers are scientists that study objects in space. They want to learn as much as possible about the universe. They want to learn about new stars and planets. What would you like to learn?

1. What are some things we can see in the night sky? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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2. How long does it take the moon to make a complete orbit?

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3. What is it that makes the moon and planets seem to shine?

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4. What would you choose to learn about as an astronomer?

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