

# Astronomy Unit 1 - Where are We?

Content Area: **Science**  
Course(s): **Astronomy**  
Time Period: **Full Year**  
Length: **18 days**  
Status: **Published**

## **NJSLS - Science**

---

SCI.HS-ESS1-4 Use mathematical or computational representations to predict the motion of orbiting objects in the solar system.

## **Science and Engineering Practices**

---

### **Using Mathematical and Computational Thinking**

Use mathematical or computational representations of phenomena to describe explanations. (HS-ESS1-4)

## **Disciplinary Core Ideas**

---

### **ESS1.B: Earth and the Solar System**

Kepler's laws describe common features of the motions of orbiting objects, including their elliptical paths around the sun. Orbits may change due to the gravitational effects from, or collisions with other objects in the solar system. (HS-ESS1-4)

## **Crosscutting Concepts**

---

### **Scale, Proportion, and Quantity**

Algebraic thinking is used to examine scientific data and predict the effect of a change in one variable on another (e.g., linear growth vs. exponential growth). (HS-ESS1-4)

## **Rationale and Transfer Goals**

---

Students will learn where they are in the universe, how to place themselves in the middle of it all (as it appears

to us), and how to find objects in the sky. Students will gain a cosmic perspective--a broad understanding of the nature, scope and evolution of the Universe, and where the Earth and Solar System fit in, the notion that physical laws and processes are universal, the notion that the world is knowable, and that we are coming to know it through observations, experiments and theory (the nature of progress in science), plus exposure to the types, roles and degrees of uncertainty in science.

## **Enduring Understandings**

---

Objects in the universe can be located in what is called the celestial sphere, as described by drawing an imaginary sphere with the observer at the center.

Our place in the universe can be thought of as our galactic address. All celestial objects have a galactic address.

## **Essential Questions**

---

Where are we located in the universe?

Are we in the center of the universe?

## **Content - What will students know?**

---

- Definitions related to the celestial sphere.

## **Skills - What will students be able to do?**

---

- Describe and explain celestial coordinates as a tool for mapping the sky (poles, equator, azimuth, altitude, ecliptic, local sky, zenith, meridian, right ascension, declination, tropics, circles).

- Explain the daily path of the seasonal constellations.

### **Activities - How will we teach the content and skills?**

---

- Making a “sextant” to measure.
- Using a compass.
- “Your Galactic Address” activity.
- Sky Sphere model making.

### **Evidence/Assessments - How will we know what students have learned?**

---

- Formative assessments
- Having students find measurements of objects in and around the building from standardized positions.
- Analysis questions after making and using models.
- Quizzes
- Tests
- Astronomy Benchmark #1

### **Spiraling for Mastery**

<b>Content or Skill for this Unit</b>	<b>Spiral Focus from Previous Unit</b>	<b>Instructional Activity</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protractor use</li> <li>• solar system (middle school)</li> </ul>		review objects in our solar system (sun, planets, asteroids, comets)

### **Key Resources**

---

TOPS Learning Systems

## **21st Century Life and Careers**

---

WRK.9.2.12.CAP.3	Investigate how continuing education contributes to one's career and personal growth.
WRK.9.2.12.CAP.4	Evaluate different careers and develop various plans (e.g., costs of public, private, training schools) and timetables for achieving them, including educational/training requirements, costs, loans, and debt repayment.
WRK.9.2.12.CAP.5	Assess and modify a personal plan to support current interests and post-secondary plans.
WRK.9.2.12.CAP.6	Identify transferable skills in career choices and design alternative career plans based on those skills.

## **Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills**

---

TECH.9.4.12.CT.3	Enlist input from a variety of stakeholders (e.g., community members, experts in the field) to design a service learning activity that addresses a local or global issue (e.g., environmental justice).
TECH.9.4.12.TL.2	Generate data using formula-based calculations in a spreadsheet and draw conclusions about the data.
TECH.9.4.12.GCA.1	Collaborate with individuals to analyze a variety of potential solutions to climate change effects and determine why some solutions (e.g., political, economic, cultural) may work better than others (e.g., SL.11-12.1., HS-ETS1-1, HS-ETS1-2, HS-ETS1-4, 6.3.12.GeoGI.1, 7.1.IH.IPERS.6, 7.1.IL.IPERS.7, 8.2.12.ETW.3).
TECH.9.4.12.IML.3	Analyze data using tools and models to make valid and reliable claims, or to determine optimal design solutions (e.g., S-ID.B.6a., 8.1.12.DA.5, 7.1.IH.IPRET.8).
TECH.9.4.12.IML.4	Assess and critique the appropriateness and impact of existing data visualizations for an intended audience (e.g., S-ID.B.6b, HS-LS2-4).
TECH.9.4.12.IML.5	Evaluate, synthesize, and apply information on climate change from various sources appropriately (e.g., 2.1.12.CHSS.6, S.IC.B.4, S.IC.B.6, 8.1.12.DA.1, 6.1.12.GeoHE.14.a, 7.1.AL.PRSNT.2).
TECH.9.4.12.IML.6	Use various types of media to produce and store information on climate change for different purposes and audiences with sensitivity to cultural, gender, and age diversity (e.g., NJLSA.SL5).
TECH.9.4.12.IML.7	Develop an argument to support a claim regarding a current workplace or societal/ethical issue such as climate change (e.g., NJLSA.W1, 7.1.AL.PRSNT.4).

## **Interdisciplinary Connections/Companion Standards**

---

### **NJSLS Mathematics**

MP.2 Reason abstractly and quantitatively. (HS-ESS1-4)

MP.4 Model with mathematics. (HS-ESS1-4)

HSN-Q.A.1 Use units as a way to understand problems and to guide the solution of multi-step problems; choose and interpret units consistently in formulas; choose and interpret the scale and the origin in graphs and data displays. (HS-ESS1-4)

HSN-Q.A.2 Define appropriate quantities for the purpose of descriptive modeling. (HS-ESS1-4)

HSN-Q.A.3 Choose a level of accuracy appropriate to limitations on measurement when reporting quantities. (HS-ESS1-4)

### **Companion Standards for ELA in Science and Technical Subjects: Reading**

#### Key Ideas and Details

RST.11-12.1. Accurately cite strong and thorough evidence from the text to support analysis of science and technical texts, attending to precise details for explanations or descriptions.

### **Companion Standards for ELA in Science and Technical Subjects: Writing**

#### Text Types and Purposes

WHST.11-12.1. Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.