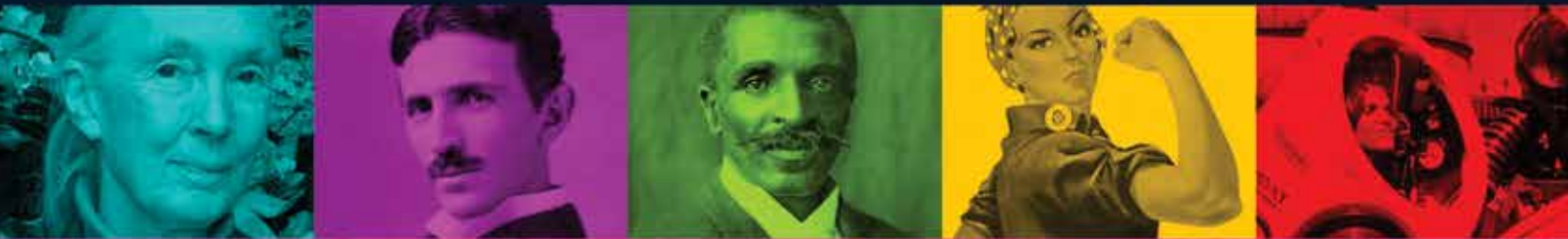




EUREKA!

GRADE 3-5 **SCIENCE ACTIVITIES AND STORIES**



**DONNA FARLAND-SMITH
JULIE THOMAS**

NSTApress
National Science Teachers Association



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NATIONAL SCIENCE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

David L. Evans, Executive Director
David Beacom, Publisher

1840 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22201
www.nsta.org/store

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20 19 18 17 4 3 2 1

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Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Farland-Smith, Donna, author. | Thomas, Julie, 1947- author.
Title: Eureka! grades 3-5 science activities and stories / Donna Farland-Smith, Julie Thomas.
Description: Arlington, VA : National Science Teachers Association, [2017] | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2017021228 | ISBN 9781681402574 (print)
Subjects: LCSH: Science--Study and teaching (Elementary)--Activity programs--United States.
Classification: LCC LB1585.3 .F37 2017 | DDC 372.35/044--dc23 LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2017021228>

e-ISBN: 9781681402581

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FOREWORD

Kevin D. Finson

Elementary teachers know the challenges of balancing literacy instruction with high-stakes testing and content area instruction. One way to do this is by incorporating literature relating to the content area into the lessons of that content area. In the case of science, the use of trade books to integrate literacy into science instruction is commonly used as a means of maximizing students' understanding of specific content-related concepts. Some educators, however, have expressed concern that not all books containing science information meet a suitable standard for both science and literature content. Perhaps more troublesome, some studies have demonstrated that science literature books can actually create or increase misconceptions about the content they include (Trundle, Troland, and Pritchard 2008). Should these concerns derail elementary teachers' selection and use of science trade books in their classrooms? Certainly, the answer is *no*. However, these concerns do heighten the need for teachers to have a clear understanding of the quality of science trade book content that appropriately conveys the desired information and concepts. Included with such considerations is the need to make trade book selections with very clear and purposeful rationales, having a definite sense for how a book's content can be used to address specific science messages to students while at the same time providing support for high-quality literacy instruction.

A perusal of many science trade books might quickly reveal that the science content targeted in them can range from concepts (such as lightning,

magnets, or volcanoes) to gizmos (such as science equipment and devices) to history (such as science during a specific era) or to other aspects of the discipline. One aspect of science that is sometimes difficult to tease out of trade books is the nature and work of scientists. What are scientists like? What do they do? How do they do it? Who can be a scientist? These are among the questions that arise when a teacher wishes to find a trade book that focuses on scientists. A trade book whose primary focus is on gizmos might mention scientists in passing but is likely going to do a poor job of addressing the actual nature of scientists. In short, it might be difficult for teachers to find high-quality science trade books that focus on the nature and work of scientists. The authors of this book have undertaken the task of helping elementary teachers with this problem. They have carefully identified key elements about the nature and work of scientists that should be considered in trade book selection and then developed and followed a process for assessing trade books to derive a set of books that could best meet the need.

Among those key features about the nature and work of scientists that are included in the authors' selection process are (1) personal stories about scientists' lives (who scientists are), (2) portrayal of science as a human endeavor (what inspires scientists' work), (3) features of the processes scientists use (what we know as the science process skills describing how scientists do what they do), and (4) illustrations of scientists (how they are depicted) within the

books. For many elementary teachers, locating personal stories (who scientists are) is likely to be the easiest of these three things to accomplish. Finding the science processes (how scientists do their work) within the pages of these same books might be a little more difficult but still relatively easy. However, finding trade books that clearly identify science as a human endeavor is more difficult but certainly possible in trade books (Segun 1988; Tapscott 2009). Let's look briefly at aspects of these last three elements the authors dealt with in this book.

Science Process Skills

How do scientists actually do science? Shortly after the launching of the satellite *Sputnik* by the Soviet Union on October 4, 1957, this became a key question for American education to answer. It was important because leaders in our nation realized we needed to do a better job of helping future citizens not only understand science but also how to actually do science. Congress provided millions of dollars in funding to various agencies and universities to develop science curricula that could help teachers accomplish this task. The three major elementary curriculum projects that emerged were Elementary Science Study (ESS), Science Curriculum Improvement Study (SCIS), and Science: A Process Approach (SAPA) (Shymansky 1989). Each of these curricula had at its heart the most significant science concepts and science process skills. The process skills were derived from observations and interviews with actual practicing scientists to assess the procedures they followed when doing their work (i.e., process skills). Hence, one of the aspects of the nature of scientists is the process skills scientists choose to use and how they employ them.

The set of science process skills derived varies depending on the source one reads, but all sets include essentially the same process skills. These

skills can be categorized as either basic process skills or integrated process skills. The basic science process skills are the foundational skills upon which all other skills are based. The integrated science process skills are those that can be seen as integrated combinations of two or more of the basic science process skills. Although educators often view the basic science process skills as being taught only at the elementary level, many of them need to be revisited during later grades and at higher levels of sophistication. The essentials about the science process skills are described below.

Basic Science Process Skills

Observing

Observing is using the senses (or extensions of them) to gather information about an object or event. An example is watching and describing an ice cube as it melts.

Inferring

Inferring is making a conclusion or interpretation based on observations, whether observed by oneself or others, using reasoning to explain data or information. An example is concluding that the lid of a container filled with water was pushed off the container by the expansion of water as it turned to ice.

Measuring

Measuring is using both standard and nonstandard measures or estimates to describe dimensions of objects or events in quantitative ways. An example is using a metric ruler to measure the length and width of an ice cube in centimeters.

Communicating

Communicating is sharing or transferring ideas through spoken, written, graphic, or pictorial form. An example is using graphs to show the

relationship of an ice cube's melting to time exposed to the air.

Using Numbers

Using numbers is applying mathematical rules and/or formulas to calculate quantities or determine relationships. An example is calculating the average time for an ice cube to melt in 25 ml of room-temperature water.

Manipulating Materials

Manipulating materials is handling or treating materials and equipment skillfully and effectively. An example is pouring a liquid from a graduated cylinder into another container when making ice.

Classifying

Classifying is grouping, ordering, or arranging objects, events, or information into groups or categories based on their properties or the criteria specified in some method or system. An example is placing ice crystals in groups based on their shape.

Predicting

Predicting is stating an outcome for a future event or condition one expects to exist based on a pattern of evidence derived from observations and measurements. An example is stating that an ice cube will melt within a specified amount of time.

Developing Vocabulary

Developing vocabulary is using and understanding terminology, specific and unique to uses of words in a discipline, in ways that have meaning. An example is applying working definitions of science concepts in verbal discussions, such as *melting* or *heat exchange* for an ice cube.

Integrated Science Process Skills

Questioning

Questioning is using questions to focus inquiry or to determine prior knowledge and establish purposes or expectations for an investigation. An example is formulating a question about how an ice cube wrapped in newspaper will melt.

Identifying and Controlling Variables

Identifying and controlling variables is identifying and describing the factors that are thought to be constant or changing under differing conditions that can affect the outcome of an experiment, keeping all of them constant except for the one being investigated. An example is identifying the factors that might affect the melting of an ice cube and keeping all of them the same except for the amount of light that shines on the ice cube.

Defining Operationally

Defining operationally is stating how to measure a variable or stating what a phenomenon is according to the actions or operations to be performed on it. An example is stating that an ice cube has "melted" when there is no solid material left in the cup where the ice cube was kept.

Recording Data

Recording data is setting down data in writing or some other permanent form (e.g., taking notes, making lists, and entering in data tables) in an organized manner to facilitate analysis to determine whether patterns or relationships exist in the data. An example is recording data about the mass of the ice remaining in an ice cube compared with the time it has been in a cup on the table.

Formulating Models

Formulating a model is creating a mental or physical model or representation of a process, object, or

event. An example is making a three-dimensional model of the molecules in an ice cube.

Hypothesizing

Hypothesizing is stating or constructing a statement that is tentative and testable about what is thought to be the expected outcome of the interaction of two or more variables. An example is stating that if one ice cube is placed in water and another is left in an open container, the one in the water will melt more quickly.

Experimenting

Experimenting is conducting procedural steps to test a hypothesis, including asking appropriate questions, stating the hypothesis, identifying and controlling variables, operationally defining variables, designing a “fair test,” and interpreting and then communicating the results. An example is investigating whether hot water or cold water freezes more quickly in a freezer.

Making Decisions

Making decisions is drawing conclusions based on the results of experiments or collections of data, including identifying alternatives and choosing a course of action from among them based on the judgment for the selection with justifiable reasons. An example is identifying alternative ways to store ice cubes to avoid causing some of them to melt within a specific amount of time.

Science as a Human Endeavor

Science as a human endeavor is a significant component of both the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) *Benchmarks for Science Literacy* (Project 2061) (AAAS *Benchmarks*; 1993), the *National Science Education Standards* (NSES; NRC 1996), and *A Framework for K–12 Science Education: Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Core Ideas* (Framework; NRC 2012), which

delineated how science as a human endeavor is evidenced by the following: (1) being people engaged in science and technology for a long time, (2) those who have contributed throughout history to the knowledge base have been both men and women and of various ethnicities—some of whom make careers in the sciences, and (3) science is an ongoing endeavor that does not end. It would seem logical that educators interested in teaching science would therefore look for ways to help students see science as a human endeavor.

A very human aspect of doing science is engaging in scientific inquiry (Akerson and Hanuscin 2005). Scientific inquiry consists of posing questions and then conducting investigations in attempts to find evidence-based answers to them. This is central to the scientific enterprise and necessitates the appropriate development of scientific habits of mind and thinking. Seeing science as a human endeavor helps students develop an image of science going beyond familiar bodies of knowledge, helps them perceive science as something they can engage in successfully, and becomes something to them that is clearly a human endeavor. Abd-El-Khalick, Bell, and Lederman (1998) and Lederman (2007) emphasized that science as a human enterprise is practiced within the context of the culture in which it is situated. Hence, how science and scientists are portrayed in trade books can help contextualize students’ views and understanding about science as a human endeavor.

Illustrations of Scientists

Good picture books include colorful images students will want to look at and be able to refer to over and over again (House and Rule 2005; Verhallen and Bus 2011; Xiung 2009). Analysis of images differentiates between photographs and other types of illustrations and considers their attributes, qualities, and appropriateness for use

with targeted student age groups. The differentiation between photographs and illustrations is an important consideration because students' preferences—and subsequent attentiveness to the images in a book—help them comprehend the content being presented (Fang 1996; Glenberg and Langston 1992).

Included in the extant research regarding the impact of illustrations and images on elementary students were examinations of image attributes of color (bold and bright versus muted and pastels), realistic versus conventionalized presentation, sharp versus rounded lines, line drawings versus drawn images, and drawings or paintings versus photographs. Rationales for considering the importance of such elements encompass improvement of reader comprehension and development of specific language. The overall design of visual features and illustrations typically guides the reader in comprehending and linking elements of stories (Andrews, Scharff, and Moses 2002; Wolfenbarger and Sipe 2007). Appropriate and well-done illustrations help children develop a language of science (beyond simple vocabulary) extending to the language of inquiry: observation, logically derived hypothesizing, question posing, and examination of evidence (Pappas 2006). So, it is important to select trade books that have appropriately designed illustrations of scientists that are constructed in ways students prefer. Students' preferences include such qualities as:

- being realistic and life-like (Rudisill 1952), with life-like realism being more important than color when those aspects are considered separately (King 1967);
- photographs, particularly in color, over drawings and paintings (Rudisill 1952; Simcock and DeLoache 2006);
- being simplified and less complex (French 1952), although they accept more

complexity increases with each grade level; and

- being more realistically colored over those either using no color or including colors too bold and not seen in the “real” things represented in the images (Rudisill 1952; Welling 1931). Younger children prefer bright primary colors, while older children tend to prefer softer colors (Andrews, Scharff, and Moses 2002; Stewig 1972). Freeman and Freeman (1933) noted that preschool-age children favored bolder and more life-like colors.

Illustrations in nonfiction picture books play an integral role in how the reader understands the content. They “serve a special comprehension function in that these [visual] elements help readers link information-containing portions of the text” (Donovan and Smolkin 2002, p. 510). Thus, illustrations are an essential component in not only understanding science content but also aiding students' understanding of science as a human endeavor or something they themselves could engage in.

Illustrations can go a long way in influencing students not only with respect to understanding where scientists work and what they do but also with regard to instilling interest and later engagement in actual career choices (Archer et al. 2010; Shope 2006). Children are very likely to formulate much of their perceptions about scientists from what they see in the illustrations in books. This factor can have a number of implications teachers may not readily consider. For example, the perceptions students hold about scientists may relate to their attitudes toward science and scientists (Finson 2003; Fung 2002). Finson (2003) found that students having more negative attitudes toward science tended to have more stereotypical perceptions of scientists, which in turn led to

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a reduced desire to pursue science as a vocation later in life.

Another component influencing student interest and choice is self-efficacy. O'Brien, Kopala, and Martinez-Pons (1999) linked self-efficacy (with respect to a given field) to the probability of an individual choosing a career in that field. Individuals who perceive themselves as being successful or potentially successful engaging in science are those who will have higher science self-efficacy. From this finding, one could reasonably conclude that individuals holding negative perceptions of science or scientists may be less interested in science and less likely to select science courses or pursue science as a career.

The specifics with respect to the *NSES* (NRC 1996) are as follows:

Standard Statement 1: “The long-term and ongoing practice of science and technology is done by many people” (NRC 1996, p. 141).

- The practice of science must include students’ practice and learning. The content of a trade book must be both age- and developmentally appropriate for its intended audience so readers can cognitively connect with what is presented. An example of a book that meets these criteria is *Gregor Mendel: The Friar Who Grew Peas* by Cheryl Bardoe (2006), which tells how Mendel had paired different species of plants to see what offspring (hybrids) would result and then would count the numbers of specific traits that exhibited themselves in each hybrid to determine whether a mathematical pattern would emerge.
- The storytelling aspect of the book is more likely to reflect science as a human endeavor than are presentations of sets of facts. As an example, in *Rachel Carson:*

Preserving a Sense of Wonder, Locker and Bruchac (2004) wrote about Carson hearing stories of robin deaths linked to pesticides, leading her to write a story in which the songbirds of the world had disappeared. Carson followed that up with *Silent Spring* in which she explained how every strand within the web of life is connected to the other strands and how the collapse of one endangers all the others.

Standard Statement 2: “Both men and women have made significant contributions to science and technology throughout history” (NRC 1996, p. 141).

- A trade book should include images of both males and females inasmuch as this is historically appropriate. In addition, the images of persons included within a trade book should be as nonstereotypical as possible (Farland 2006a; Farland 2006b).

Standard Statement 3: “By its nature, science will never be finished. Although much has been learned through inquiry about phenomena, objects, and events, there remains ever more to be discovered and learned” (NRC 1996, p. 141).

- Two things need consideration: (1) accuracy of the science information (Rice and Snipes 1997) and (2) attributes of the processes of science as delineated by the *NSES* and National Science Teachers Association documents on scientific literacy (Showalter et al. 1974). An example of a trade book that meets the requisites for accuracy of science information is Dan Yaccarino’s (2009) *The Fantastic Undersea Life of Jacques Cousteau*, in which he describes how Cousteau conducted life inventories of sea flora and fauna in books and documentaries and

how that inventory information changed over decades of study.

Standard Statement 4: “Many men and women choose science as a vocation and devote their lives to studying it. Many also derive great pleasure from doing so” (NRC 1996, p. 141).

- The story presented in a trade book should illustrate the roles of people engaging in the scientific enterprise. A good example is Jacqueline Briggs Martin’s (1998) *Snowflake Bentley*, in which she describes how a farmer became interested in and persisted in photographing snowflakes over many years until he was able to publish a book about them at the age of 66—and even then he continued his work about them.

Conclusion

In writing this book, the authors have been diligent and deliberate in selecting the science trade

books that serve as the anchors for each of the chapters. Through careful examination of each of those books, the authors identified the science process skills that were attendant to the work of the person at the focus of each book and then matched those process skills to suggested activities that clearly lead children in their learning of how to apply those essential skills for investigations in science.

Elementary teachers who read and use this book will benefit from the extensive work already completed by the authors. Teachers can be confident that the trade books used as the focus within the chapters are high quality and meet well-established standards for both literacy and science with respect to the nature of scientists. Making use of this book will help teachers save precious time, will help them make science more personable to their students, and will guide them in how to connect the science process skills central to excellent science activities they can select to accompany literature that truly engages students.

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to the best science teacher I know, who teaches at Eastford Elementary School in Connecticut.

—Donna Farland-Smith

This book is dedicated to my most supportive husband, who has helped me brainstorm, craft, and edit these ideas and lessons from the very beginning.

—Julie Thomas

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank NSTA Press for the opportunity to publish this work. Special thanks to Amanda Van Beuren for her editorial expertise.

We're especially grateful to the many teachers at Alton Darby Elementary, Ridgewood Elementary, and Darby Creek Elementary in the Hilliard City School District (Columbus, Ohio) and to Alexandria Walenz at Roper Elementary in the Lincoln Public School District (Lincoln, Nebraska)

for their willingness to participate in the development of many of these lessons. Thank you also to their administrators—Herb Higginbotham, Tara Grove, and Cindy Teske—for their support. Thanks to the amazing Andrew Queler for sharing photographs of his unique sawfish nostrums for use in this book. And thanks to Susie Scott, whose passion for teaching science is unmatched!

About the Authors



Donna Farland-Smith has over a decade of experience in the classroom and previously taught science in all grades K–12. She currently serves as an associate professor of science education in The School of Teaching and Learning at The Ohio State University-Mansfield. Her areas of expertise include teacher education, students' perceptions of science and scientists, and encouraging girls to explore science and engineering fields. Along with several book chapters and many articles about science education, Farland-Smith has written and published four books that inspire children to understand and appreciate scientists and their work: *Jungle Jane* (Authentic Perceptions Press, 2002), *It Takes Two: The Story of the Watson and Crick Team* (Authentic Perceptions Press, 2002), and *The Simple Truth About Scientists* (Authentic Perceptions Press,

2002). Farland-Smith received a BA in elementary education, a BA in natural science, an MA in science education, and an EdD in mathematics and science education from the University of Massachusetts-Lowell. In 2017, she published the book *Many Hands, One Vision: 20 Principles That Built a Children's Museum and Revitalized a Downtown Community* (CreateSpace), which tells about her experience in founding The Little Buckeye Children's Museum in Mansfield, Ohio.

Julie Thomas is an experienced elementary classroom teacher and elementary gifted-program coordinator. Now a research professor of science education in the College of Education and Human Sciences at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Thomas



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

focuses her efforts on elementary science—for teachers and their students. She has led both state-funded and federally funded projects and has published research about children’s science learning and teacher professional development. Thomas’s accomplishments include collaborative efforts such as No Duck Left Behind, a partnership with waterfowl biologists to promote wetland education efforts; and Engineering Is Everywhere (E2), a partnership with a materials engineer to develop a time-efficient model for STEM career education. Throughout her

teaching career, Thomas has been active in professional associations such as the School Science and Mathematics Association, for which she is a past executive director; the National Science Teachers Association, for which she has authored articles in the journal *Science and Children* and has served on the Awards Committee and Nominations Committee; and the Council for Elementary Children International, for which she is a past president.

SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS ARE

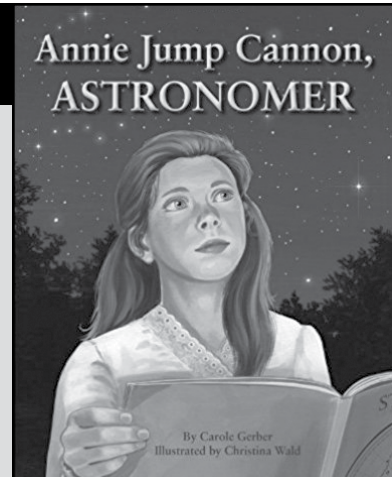
IMAGINATIVE

Learning About **Annie Jump Cannon**

Imaginative (adj.): creative or having the ability to think of unique ideas

Lesson: Starlight—Light From the Sun Description

In this lesson, students will learn about how scientist Annie Jump Cannon observed variations in the brightness of stars and explored behaviors of light from the Sun.



Objectives

Students will consider how the character trait of *being imaginative* helped Annie Jump Cannon develop a classification system for stars and explore the nature of reflected light.

- Before starting the lesson, students will make a two-dimensional (2-D) foldable model of their place in the solar system.
- As a class, students will make a model to show the position of Earth and the solar system within the Milky Way galaxy.
- Students will hear the story *Annie Jump Cannon, Astronomer* by Carole Gerber and discuss how it relates to the word *imaginative*.
- Students will explore the behaviors and benefits of luminous and reflected light.
- To conclude the lesson, students will engage in a light-tag activity to further explore the behavior of reflected light.

Learning Outcomes

Students will (1) make a science notebook entry to explain what it means to be imaginative and why being imaginative is an important trait for scientists and engineers and (2) demonstrate their understanding of the behavior and benefits of reflected light.

Connections to the NGSS and the Nature of Science, Grades 3–5 Disciplinary Core Ideas

ESS1.A: THE UNIVERSE AND ITS STARS

- The sun is a star that appears larger and brighter than other stars because it is closer. Stars range greatly in their distance from Earth.

PS3.B: CONSERVATION OF ENERGY AND ENERGY TRANSFER

- Energy is present whenever there are moving objects, sound, light, or heat. When objects collide, energy can be transferred from one object to another, thereby changing their motion. In such collisions, some energy is typically also transferred to the surrounding air; as a result, the air gets heated and sound is produced.
- Light also transfers energy from place to place.

PS4.B: ELECTROMAGNETIC RADIATION

- An object can be seen when light reflected from its surface enters the eyes.

Science and Engineering Practices

Asking Questions and Defining Problems: A practice of science is to ask and refine questions that lead to descriptions and explanations of how the natural and designed world works and which can be empirically tested. Asking questions and defining problems in grades 3–5 builds from grades K–2 experiences and progresses to specifying qualitative relationships.

- Ask questions that can be investigated and predict reasonable outcomes based on patterns such as cause and effect relationships.
- Define a simple design problem that can be solved through the development of an object, tool, process, or system and includes several criteria for success and constraints on materials, time, or cost.

Developing and Using Models: A practice of both science and engineering is to use and construct models as helpful tools for representing ideas and explanations. These tools include diagrams, drawings, physical replicas, mathematical representations, analogies, and computer simulations. Modeling in 3–5 builds on K–2 experiences and progresses to building and revising simple models and using models to represent events and design solutions.

- Develop and/or use models to describe and/or predict phenomena.
- Use a model to test cause and effect relationships or interactions concerning the functioning of a natural or designed system.

Crosscutting Concepts

Patterns: Observed patterns in nature guide organization and classification and prompt questions about relationships and causes underlying them.

- Similarities and differences in patterns can be used to sort, classify, communicate and analyze simple rates of change for natural phenomena and designed products.
- Patterns can be used as evidence to support an explanation.

Scale, Proportion, and Quantity: In considering phenomena, it is critical to recognize what is relevant at different size, time, and energy scales, and to recognize proportional relationships between different quantities as scales change.

- Natural objects and/or observable phenomena exist from the very small to the immensely large or from very short to very long time periods.
- Standard units are used to measure and describe physical quantities such as weight, time, temperature, and volume.

Nature of Science Connections

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS USE A VARIETY OF METHODS

- Science methods are determined by questions.
- Science investigations use a variety of methods, tools, and techniques.

SCIENCE KNOWLEDGE IS BASED ON EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

- Science findings are based on recognizing patterns.
- Science uses tools and technologies to make accurate measurements and observations.

SCIENCE IS A WAY OF KNOWING

- Science is both a body of knowledge and processes that add new knowledge.

SCIENCE IS A HUMAN ENDEAVOR

- Men and women from all cultures and backgrounds choose careers as scientists and engineers.
- Most scientists and engineers work in teams.
- Creativity and imagination are important to science.

SCIENCE ADDRESSES QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NATURAL AND MATERIAL WORLD

- Science findings are limited to questions that can be answered with empirical evidence.

Source: NGSS Lead States 2013.

Overview

In this lesson, students learn how Annie Jump Cannon invented a model for classifying stars based on the stars' temperatures and shared her classification system with others in her science community. This challenged the way people thought about female astronomers. Through the featured book, students learn that men and women from all backgrounds choose careers as scientists and engineers. The character trait *imaginative* references Cannon's meticulous and creative attempts to organize the starlight behaviors she observed. Students also share ideas about women being scientists. In the hands-on exploration, students explore the nature of reflected light.

Materials

You will need supply of 9 in. × 14 in. or 8.5 in. × 11 in. colored paper in seven colors, enough for one color set for each student; and one copy of the featured book, *Annie Jump Cannon, Astronomer*, by Carole Gerber (ISBN 978-1589809116). Each group of students will need one rock, a cup of water, a piece of aluminum foil, a piece of white paper, and a small plastic bag. Each student will need a set of colored papers prepared ahead by the teacher, a glue stick, his or her science notebook, a flashlight, safety glasses or goggles, and a small acrylic mirror (e.g., 3 in. × 5 in.). *Note:* Acrylic mirrors minimize the safety risks of glass mirrors. Sheets of mirrored acrylic are available online and in most building supply stores and can be cut to any size.

Safety Notes

(1) Personal protective equipment should be worn during the setup, hands-on, and takedown segments of the activity. (2) Immediately wipe up spilled water—it creates a slip-and-fall hazard. (3) Wash hands with soap and water upon completing this activity.

Setting the Context

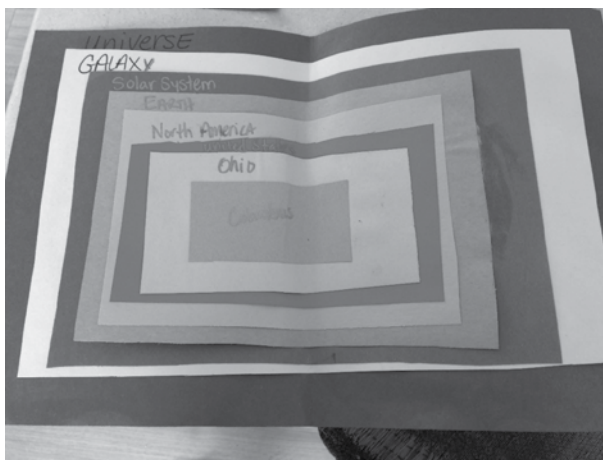
Engage

Ask students whether they have ever wondered how humans fit in the universe; that is, where we are relative to galaxies, the universe, and the solar system. Ask, “Which is larger, a galaxy, the universe, or a solar system?” Help students build a model of the universe so they appreciate how they actually fit into the big picture.

1. Before class, prepare the colored paper sets for students, planning for all students to create their stacks in the same color sequence. Leave the sheets of the first color of paper whole. For each subsequent color, cut the sheet to be 1 in. shorter and 1 in. narrower than for the previous color.
2. Provide each student with one set of precut colored paper and a glue stick. Have students stack the seven paper sheets by descending size (see Figure 3.1) and glue them in place.
3. Help students label their models. First, have them label the bottommost paper “Universe” (the outermost location in the universe model) and the topmost paper “Home” (the innermost location in the universe model). *Students might instead use the city name and/or street addresses for the innermost label.* Involve students in a conversation about which colors in this model represent the Milky Way galaxy, the solar system, Earth, North America, the United States, and their state. Prompt students with questions about relative size; for example, ask, “If the universe is the biggest, what fits inside it?” It is sometimes easier to begin with the home city and expand outward. You might use the book *My Place in Space* by Robin and Sally Hirst to help your students think about the smaller and larger components of this model.
4. Prompt students to connect their models to the classification of the stars by asking, “Where would the stars be found?” and “How might scientists find out the temperature of a star?” Guide the discussion to the idea that collecting data about space is challenging because stars are far away.

Figure 3.1

Example of a Student’s Stacked-Paper Model of the Universe



This model helps students conceptualize the relative sizes of the various parts of the universe and their location within it. See Zike 2004 for more information.

Guided Reading

Inform students that by reading *Annie Jump Cannon, Astronomer*, they will be learning about how stars are classified and about the work of Annie Jump Cannon, a scientist who was especially imaginative. Introduce the book by asking, “Can you describe the person on the front cover? What seems to be happening on the front cover?” Read the story aloud. Encourage students to notice and think about the challenges Cannon faced as a female astronomer. The questions below may be used to guide students’ attention to detail as you read. (Page numbers reference unnumbered book pages, beginning with the title page as page 1.)

1. **Pages 3–5:** When she was young, Annie Jump Cannon enjoyed stargazing with her mother. How did Cannon and her mother know what stars they were looking at? *Cannon and her mother climbed onto the roof of their house and matched their view of the night sky to her mother’s school star charts. This was how Cannon learned the names of the visible constellations.*
2. **Pages 6–10:** Cannon enrolled in a nearby boys’ school after they began admitting girls and graduated at the top of her class. How did Cannon happen to then enroll in Wellesley College? *Annie’s father had toured Wellesley on a business trip and was impressed that Wellesley, a women’s college, offered the same courses as all-male universities.*
3. **Pages 12–15:** Cannon loved attending Wellesley College, especially the laboratory experiments in her science classes. What challenges did she encounter as a student? *During her sophomore year, Cannon had scarlet fever and developed an ear infection that left her partially deaf. Despite that, she graduated with her class.*
4. **Pages 16–18:** After her mother died, Cannon remembered how much she had enjoyed studying the stars with her mother, so she returned to Wellesley to study astronomy. How did Cannon’s astronomy studies set the course for her career? *While at Wellesley, Cannon arranged a way to use the telescope at the Harvard College Observatory.*
5. **Pages 19–21:** The director of Harvard College Observatory hired Cannon to help photograph and classify all the stars in the sky; however, Cannon soon learned that she would not actually be photographing stars. How did astronomers take photographs of the stars? Why did Cannon not photograph stars? *Astronomers used a special system to photograph the stars. They attached prisms to telescopes that separated the light from each star into different wavelengths, similarly to how raindrops separate sunlight into a rainbow. Cannon did not take photographs of the stars because only the male astronomers were allowed to. Women could only be assistants who worked as “human*





computers” to examine the photographic plates (spectrographs) to analyze the type of light from each star. Women were paid one-fourth the amount that men were paid.

6. **Pages 24–28:** Cannon had sharp eyes and a good memory and soon became the fastest computer—she could classify three stars per minute. How did she identify a problem with the classification system? *The computers*

used magnifying glasses to examine the spectrographs. They used the dark lines on the spectrographs to determine what the star was made of and how hot it was and then ranked the stars (named according to letters of the alphabet) on the basis of their spectral characteristics. Cannon noticed, for example, that the O stars (the brightest) were the hottest and the A stars were the third hottest. So, she developed a shorter, more accurate star classification system that organized the classes of stars from hottest to coolest—O, B, A, F, G, K, M. Her system is still used today and is remembered by the mnemonic “Oh Be A Fine Guy/Girl, Kiss Me.”

Annie Jump Cannon

7. **Pages 26–29:** Introduce a discussion of the importance of Cannon’s model for classifying stars in ranked order from hottest to coolest by asking the following questions. How did Cannon become known as “the census taker of the stars”? Why is this system needed, and why is it important to science? How does this science activity of re-creating Cannon’s classification system on a model help you think about Cannon’s imaginative model for classifying the stars? *This is a complex model, and students are expected to understand only that she saw patterns in both the spectra and the temperatures of stars and that she reorganized the alphabetical lettering system (OBAFGKM) to classify stars from hottest (O) to coolest (M).*

Making Sense

Explore

Begin by holding a discussion about rainbows to help students recall their knowledge of refraction—the bending and separating of light into a spectrum of colors. Although refraction is not the lesson focus, this discussion will help students connect the lesson to Annie Jump Cannon’s interest in and research about stars. Initiate the discussion by asking, “When do we see rainbows?” “What are the colors of the rainbow?” and “What causes rainbows?” *Rainbows appear when rain and sunlight interact in a specific manner. When sunlight passes through water droplets, the droplets act like prisms and refract (bend) the various wavelengths of light that make up white light, which we then see as a spectrum of colors—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet (ROYGBIV). Cannon worked with images collected through telescopes equipped with prisms and recognized that the different classes of stars emitted light composed of particular wavelengths, which could be distinguished by their refraction through the prisms.*

Extend the discussion to students’ experience of light from the Sun and other stars. Ask, “What do we know about the light that comes from the Sun, which is one of the largest stars in our galaxy?” Encourage students to share personal experiences and observations of the nature of light from the Sun (e.g., what sunlight feels like on their skin, that sunlight passes through clouds and windows, and that blocking sunlight produces shadows). Then, inform students that they will conduct an exploration of how the Sun’s light behaves when it strikes various objects. *This exploration focuses on reflection, the bouncing of light rays off an object, which allows us to see the object. It is organized in two parts and will work best in a darkened classroom with the lights off and the shades drawn.* The steps of the exploration are as follows:

1. Organize students into table groups and provide each group with a rock, a cup of water, a piece of aluminum foil, a piece of white paper, and a small plastic bag. Each student will need a flashlight. Invite students to examine each item and predict what will happen when they shine a flashlight on it. Encourage students to think of the flashlight as the Sun. Guide their thinking

by asking, “What will happen to the light when it hits this object?” “Where will the light go?” and “Will the light rays pass through, be blocked, or be reflected?” Have students record their predictions in their science notebooks; encourage them to create a chart so they can record both their predictions and their test results. Then, allow some time for students to use their flashlights to test their predictions. *Students should find that the opaque objects (rock and paper) will block some light and cast a shadow; the shiny object (aluminum foil) will reflect or redirect some of the light; and the clear objects (water and plastic bag) will allow most or all of the light to pass through. Note that all the objects actually reflect some light, although this will not be obvious to your students. This fine point may become clear in the “Extend” and “Explain” sections that follow.*

2. Have students work in pairs. Provide each pair with a flashlight and a small acrylic mirror. Begin with the guiding question, “What happens when the Sun’s light reflects off a mirror?” Prompt students to think of their flashlight as the Sun, and invite them to work together to observe what happens when they shine their flashlight on the mirror. They should easily observe a reflected light beam if they lay the flashlight on the table and shine it into a mirror held perpendicular to the table so that some of the light spills onto the table. Once they recognize the line of reflected light, ask, “How can you change the line of reflected light?” Challenge students to record their data by creating three diagrams in their science notebooks. Each diagram should include an arrow to show the direction of the reflected (outgoing) light. *Students may need to adjust the angle of the mirror and the distance between the flashlight and the mirror. Once students have completed their three diagrams, ask, “What pattern do you see?” Students should be able to explain that light reflecting from the mirrors travels in a straight line and that the angle of reflection changes when the position of the mirror changes.*

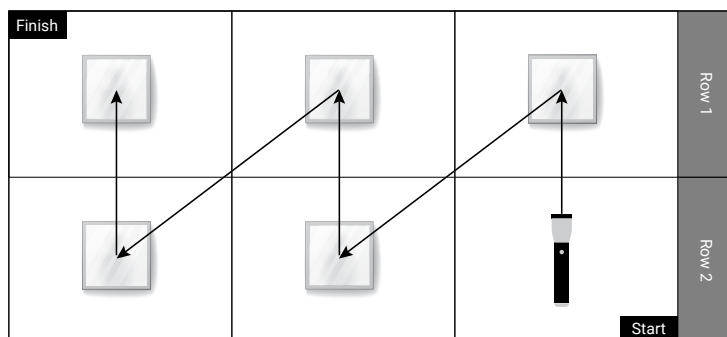
Explain

Encourage students to summarize their understanding of the different ways the Sun’s light (modeled by the flashlight) behaved when it struck opaque, shiny, and clear objects and the relationship between the angle of the mirror and the line of reflection. *Note: There is a rule for mirror reflections—that the angle of the incidence equals the angle of the reflection—but this is not the point in this lesson. Rather, this lesson introduces the concept of a definite line of light that reflects from the mirror.*

Extend

Organize a light-tag activity. Darken the classroom (turn the lights off and draw the shades) and seat students in two facing rows. Each pair of facing rows is a group. Give a flashlight to a student seated at the end of a row and give small acrylic mirrors to the other students. The goal is for the group members with mirrors to adjust

Figure 3.2
One Way to Organize Students in Rows for Light Tag



them so that the light from the flashlight reflects off each mirror in turn until the light reaches the last person in the group (see Figure 3.2). Then, ask each group to explain what they learned about how to position the mirrors.

Evaluate

Summative evaluation of this lesson will include

assessment of students' understanding of (1) what it means to be imaginative and how scientists and engineers might benefit from the character trait of being imaginative and (2) the behavior of light when it hits an object and the benefits of reflected light.

CHARACTER TRAIT

Encourage students to answer the following questions:

1. If Annie Jump Cannon had not designed the starlight classification system, do you think someone else would have? *Although others might eventually have thought of these ideas, Cannon was imaginative and saw a relationship between the heat of the stars and the light being emitted.*
2. Why is being imaginative an important attribute for scientists to have and how was Cannon imaginative? *Imaginative people are clever and often see things that others overlook. In Cannon's case, she perceived the relationship between a star's spectra and its temperature (i.e., she recognized that hotter stars are bluer and cooler stars are redder). From that, she developed a shorter, more accurate system for classifying stars than any astronomer before or since her time.*
3. Brainstorm with a partner about a time when you were (or wished you were) imaginative and/or to think of someone else you consider to be imaginative, such as a family member or neighbor.

CONTENT

You will want to assess students' understanding about how the Sun's light behaves when it strikes opaque, shiny, and clear objects and how light is reflected in a mirror. Table 3.1 is a rubric you might use to evaluate their science notebook entries.

Table 3.1

Rubric for Assessing Student Science Notebook Entries for Starlight—Light From the Sun

Content	Not Yet	Beginning	Developing	Secure
Opaque Objects	Student did not include information about the rock and paper blocking some light and casting a shadow.	Student included some information about the rock and paper blocking some light and casting a shadow.	Student included much information about the rock and paper blocking some light and casting a shadow.	Student included much information about the rock and paper blocking some light and casting a shadow and a clear explanation for that phenomenon.
Shiny Objects	Student did not include information about the aluminum foil reflecting or redirecting some light.	Student included some information about the aluminum foil reflecting or redirecting some light.	Student included much information about the aluminum foil reflecting or redirecting some light.	Student included much information about the aluminum foil reflecting or redirecting some light and a clear explanation for that phenomenon.
Clear Objects	Student did not include information about the water and plastic bag allowing the light to pass through them.	Student included some information about the water and plastic bag allowing the light to pass through them.	Student included much information about the water and plastic bag allowing the light to pass through them.	Student included much information about the water and plastic bag allowing the light to pass through them and a clear explanation for that phenomenon.
Mirror	Student did not produce three diagrams with an arrow showing the direction of the reflected (outgoing) light.	Student produced three diagrams but they did not all have an arrow showing the direction of the reflected (outgoing) light.	Student produced three diagrams and all had an arrow showing the direction of the reflected (outgoing) light.	Has three diagrams that include an arrow to show the direction of the reflected (outgoing) light. Highlights the relationship between the angle of incidence and the angle of reflection.

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PB423X1
ISBN: 978-1-68140-257-4

