



STATEWIDE STAR PARTY

OBJECTIVE

To look up at the sky, observe a star, and draw it

SUGGESTED AGE RANGE

Ages 3 and up

ACTIVITY DURATION

5–10 minutes

MATERIALS



These materials are included in the Star Party host kit.

- black construction paper, cut into half sheets
- colored chalk
- Optional: *Stars* by Mary Lyn Ray
- Optional: star chart

SETTING

Outside to find a star + somewhere to draw (e.g., a table, with some light available)

THE WISHING STAR

Activity Instructions

<http://www.ncsciencefestival.org/starparty>

BACKGROUND

The practice of wishing on the first bright object seen in the evening sky dates back to our ancestors. This inspiring verse is many years old:

Star light, star bright,

The first star I see tonight;

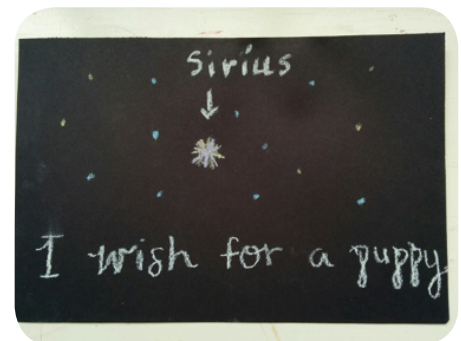
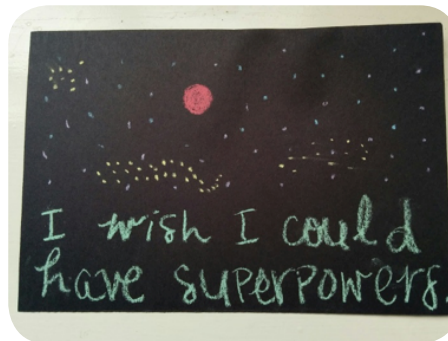
I wish I may, I wish I might,

Have the wish I wish tonight.

Which star is the wishing star? It's the first one you see!

PROCEDURE

1. Optional: Begin by reading aloud *Stars* by Mary Lyn Ray. This children's book encourages looking at the night sky and drawing your own star.
2. Ask your visitors to look up in the evening sky and find a bright star.
3. Encourage them to look at the star closely. What color is it? Is it twinkling?
4. Give each participant a half sheet of black construction paper. Provide access to the chalk.
5. Invite them to draw the star they see and its nearby companions on the black paper with colored—or white—chalk.
6. If you're displaying a star chart, ask: Can you find the star's name on a star chart? Add the name to your drawing.
7. **MAKE A WISH!** Add the wish to your drawing. (What if you wished on a planet? Not a problem.)



Brighter stars are marked with larger dots on the April 2017 Star Party star chart. They include:

- **Sirius**, in Canis Major
- **Arcturus**, in Boötes
- **Capella**, in Auriga
- **Procyon**, in Canis Minor
- **Betelgeuse**, in Orion
- **Spica**, in Virgo
- **Pollux**, in Gemini
- **Regulus**, in Leo

At April 2017 Star Party events, you may also spot planets: **Jupiter** (brighter than any of the stars) and **Mars**. How do you tell a planet from a star? Stars twinkle, but planets generally shine more steadily.



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