

LETTER TO PARENTS AND TEACHERS

HOW DO I USE THIS BOOK?

Reading

The readings and activities are appropriate for children from kindergarten through fifth grade. The last section, beginning on page 41, is the most advanced. The beauty of this book is its adaptability for use with a variety of ages.

For younger students, read aloud to them or let them take turns reading small segments. The Bible passages, in particular, may be hard for them. Simplify the writing assignments as necessary. For older students, use more experiments and discussion questions. Let them read everything by themselves, either aloud to the family or to themselves.

There are twenty-five readings and more than fifty activities, which can be used in many different ways. A student can use this book as an individual science/Bible workbook, adding their own drawings and notes directly on the pages. Or the teacher can use it as a resource guide to developing her own unit on science/weather/Bible.

Student Notebooks

The Student Notebook Approach works terrifically with this book! Each student can keep their own notebook or journal throughout the course of this study. Use it to record information, write down questions, vocabulary words learned, experiments done, projects, artwork, Bible verses, and anything else relevant to the unit. Small children may prefer small journals! Choosing a little notebook that is cheerful and not overwhelming in size will give them the confidence and motivation to begin keeping records. This is a great lifelong habit to develop. (For more information on this method of education, research the Principle Approach and the Charlotte Mason “Living Books” approach.)

Unit Studies

Here are some great ideas to get you started:

Science - The science questions are good springboards to discussion. Children can look up sky topics they’re interested in and write short reports or make displays to show what they’ve learned. Science vocabulary is sprinkled throughout.

Bible - Colorful rainbow bookmarks are a new way to find and remember stories and verses in the Bible. Bible storm stories can be read on stormy days and star verses on starry nights. (*See Bible Activities.*)

Math Skills - Measure amounts of snow and rain, conventional temperatures from Fahrenheit to Centigrade, computing the average weekly temperatures, or the total rainfall, etc. (*See Weather Activities.*)

Art Projects - Encourage awareness by observing the changing patterns in the sky. Take photos and draw pictures to record observations. Almost every page has room for student drawings.

Outdoor Activities - Whatever the weather, there are many activities for outdoor fun. (*See Windy Day and Sunny Day Activities for some examples.*)

Activity Kits - Set up learning centers for science experiments and art projects.

Weather Station - Make and use to record daily observations on a chart. (*See Weather Activities.*)

Sky Watching - Use during a break from studies: students run to the windows, observe the sky for two minutes, then return to their work. Use this to develop attention to details.

Research - Newspapers, encyclopedias, weather and sky atlases, TV weather reports, and the Internet are just a few of the many resources available for extra research. The sky's the limit!

Writing - Children can observe the sky each day and write in their sky journals. Poems and prayers can be written inside different sky shapes. (*See Sky Writing, Sky Diamonds, and Sky Prayers for many other ideas.*)

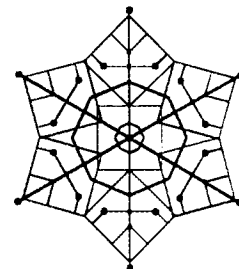
Handwriting - Scripture verses are good for handwriting practice. The handwritten verses can also be illustrated with rainbows, stars, etc.

Sample Lesson

1. Readings
2. Questions & Discussions
3. Bible Verses
4. Activity
5. Prayer

Using "All in a Snowflake" on pages 28 & 29 your lesson plan might look like this:

1. Read "All in a Snowflake."
2. Have a discussion about material read.
3. Make cutout snowflakes and mount them on colored paper.
4. On the back they can make a sky diamond, write a poem about snowflakes, or copy their Bible verse.
5. End in prayer based on what was learned in this lesson.



Daily Devotions

Many parents would like to have daily devotions with their children but they don't always know how to begin or what to use. The children may be of a wide age-span or may be bored with the materials currently being used. This book gives ideas for teaching about God anytime and anywhere.

Read this in a cozy corner on a stormy night, on a long car trip (while skywatching, of course!), or on a blanket out in the backyard. Inside or outside, winter or summer, this book offers a plethora of ideas for daily devotions to our Lord God!

- ◆Parents can look up activities which fit the season and the weather. The Table of Contents is useful when you are looking for great stuff during the following times:
- ◆Boring, rainy days when there seems like nothing to do.
- ◆Sunny, summer days when you need new ideas for family fun.
- ◆Travel times when there are new opportunities to explore nature and sky watch.
- ◆Busy days when you only have just a few minutes for science or Bible.

“Minute Vacations”

Most of us have little snippets of time here and there. If you have two, or five, or ten minutes, you can take a “Minute Vacation” by concentrating on the sky. Use as many of the five senses as possible. Either focus on one small detail of the sky or the entire big sky picture, and ask yourself questions about it. What does a waterdrop reflect? Why can you still see the sun's light after it has disappeared over the skyline? When time permits, look up answers to your questions and record them in your sky journal or student notebook.

Sky watching can be enjoyed by children and adults of all ages and can be done at the playground, the kitchen window, during a car ride or anywhere you can see the sky. This quick vacation can be the pause that refreshes as you take a moment out of a busy day to see the sky and thank its Creator.

Blessings as You Discover the Sky!

However you choose to use *Over our Heads in Wonder*, we hope that you and your children will grow in your understanding of God's word and His incredible creation. Enjoy your study of God's marvelous work - the sky!

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Sky Watching

Open your eyes and look at the skies.

The sky is filled with many things-
raindrops and rainbows,
clouds and sunshine,
birds and airplanes,
stars and planets.
But most of the sky is empty;
it doesn't even have air in it.

We see the sky as blue,
filled with an ocean of air,
with big waves of wind that come rushing by.
But if we go up high in the sky in a spaceship,
the sky looks black and empty,
with only a few twinkling lights in it.

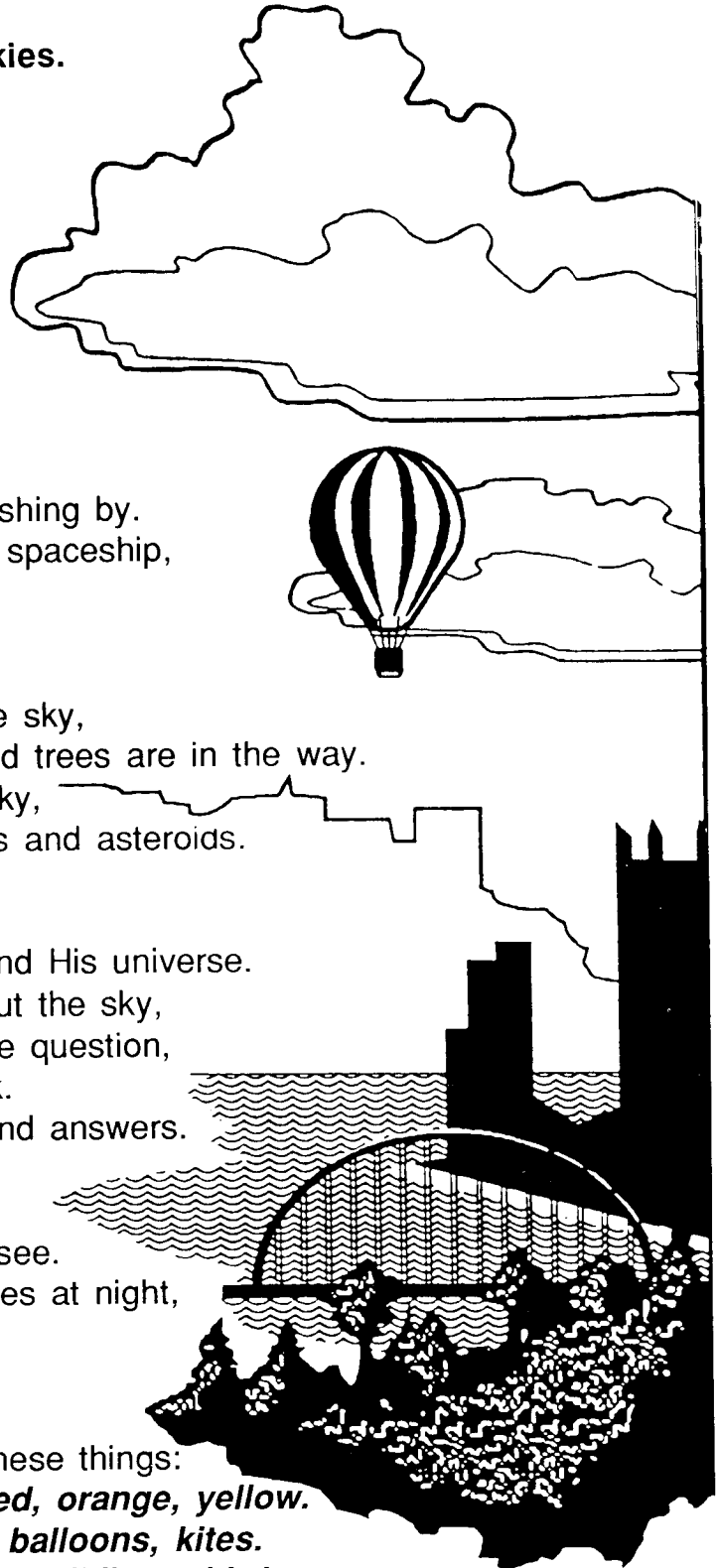
We can see only a small slice of the sky,
because the mountains, buildings and trees are in the way.
Only God can see the whole wide sky,
with all the different planets, meteors and asteroids.

When we see the big sky,
we have big questions about God and His universe.
We can ask a million questions about the sky,
And when we find the answer to one question,
God gives us more questions to ask.
Only God knows all the questions and answers.

Be a sky-watcher.
The longer you look, the more you see.
Watch the sky all day, and sometimes at night,
through windows, in your yard,
on hilltops, from a car, everywhere.

When you watch the sky, look for these things:

- ★ Sky colors.....*shades of blue, red, orange, yellow.*
- ★ Flying things...*birds, airplanes, balloons, kites.*
- ★ Cloud shapes...*animals, people, buildings, birds.*
- ★ Skies spilling over...*rain, hail, snow, sleet.*



- ★ Sun's activities...*hiding behind clouds, warming the air.*
- ★ Night sky wonders....*moon, stars, planets, constellations.*
- ★ Kinds of clouds....*cirrus , stratus and cumulus clouds.*
- ★ Rainbows....*pieces of rainbows, full rainbows, double rainbows.*

What does the sky look like right now?

Close your eyes and tell about it in detail.

If you can't remember, go out and look at it with your eyes really open.

Isn't God's sky full of wonder and beauty!

RECIPE for a SKY

God made a big place..... With lots of space.
He put in some air..... But not everywhere.
A black bowl of stars..... A blue bowl of clouds.
One big moon.....Hiding at noon.
And sunlight..... Hiding at night.

Questions to Think About:

Why is the sky blue?

Sunlight is a mixture of many different colors. As sunlight comes through the earth's air, the light rays break up and spread out. The short rays spread out more than the long rays. The blue rays are very short so they spread out more than the other colors. Most of the sky looks blue on a clear day because these blue rays are reflected back to us from all parts of the sky.

Does the sky change color if you climb up a mountain?

Whether you are looking from a mountain, or a ship, or a plane, the sky looks blue. However, the sky has many shades of blue. The blue of the sky gets darker as you climb a mountain, or go up in an airplane.

Why is the sky black when you get very far up?

It is black because there are no air molecules to scatter the blue color. For example, astronauts see blackness in outer space where there is no air.

Here are some questions from the Bible. Can you answer them?

“Which is the way to the home of the light, and where does darkness live?

Have you ever visited the place where snow is kept?

Has the rain a father? Job 38: 19,22,28. (JB)

Do you know everything about light and darkness or snow and rain?

Who knows everything and can answer all questions about all things?

16. WINDY DAY ACTIVITIES

Flying Discs

Can you make something to catch the wind and fly?

MATERIALS: Plastic plates, metal pie pans, paper plates, or cardboard circles. Make several flying discs of different materials, and try them out.

1. Which disc will go the farthest? How many feet will it go? Measure the distance with a yardstick.
2. Which is the best way to throw the disc? Try overhand, underhand, waist high and chest high.
3. Can you make your discs fly toward a target? Try flying the discs at targets that are ten feet away, fifteen feet away, etc.

What two kinds of power did you use? Aren't you glad that God made wind power and muscle power?

Parachutes

Can you make the wind work for you?

MATERIALS

1. One handkerchief, square of cloth, or paper napkin.
2. One weight, which can be a clothespin, piece of wood, etc.
3. String or thread, and tape.

DIRECTIONS

1. Cut four pieces of string or thread that are 12 inches long.
2. Tie or tape the pieces of string or thread to the four corners of the material. Tie or tape the four threads or strings to the weight.
3. Fold up your parachute and toss it out a window or high up in the air. Why does it come down so slowly?

Parachute Tests

Try different types of parachutes, and see which one comes down more slowly. Here are some ideas:

- ★ Larger parachutes.
- ★ Longer strings.
- ★ A hole in the top of the parachute.
- ★ A circle parachute.
- ★ A plastic parachute.

Try different kinds of objects, and see whether the heavier or lighter ones come down faster.

You could try a crumpled ball of paper, a cork, a film can with pennies or rocks in it, or a small plastic figure.