

Key Stage 2: Science and the Stars

The final page of these notes can be copied and given to students who you think may need additional support during the workshop or to adult helpers.

Before your visit: preparing for your workshop

- Key themes of the workshop are the observation of the movements of the sun moon and stars, how scientific instruments can help us tell the time, and scientists and explorers who used the instruments through history.
- Key vocabulary includes orbit, the Earth's axis, sunrise, sunset, astronomer, observation and nocturnal.
- You may like to explore the movement of the changing position of the sun at different times of year and the moon's orbit or the Earth. You may also like to talk about early navigation and exploration.

During your visit

- The session begins with a look at the relative movements of the sun, moon and stars followed by the opportunity to tell the time using a sundial and a moondial, with the chance to explore the differences between the two. Students will also investigate the movement of the stars and practise telling the with them using replica instruments. The session will end with a look at some of the scientific instruments of display in galleries around the museum and reflect on who they were used by and why.
- Galleries with objects relating to the workshop:
 - Room 34: Islamic scientific instruments
 - Room 46: Tudors
 - Room 1: Enlightenment Gallery

Science and the stars continued...

After your visit: follow-up activities

- You may like to continue looking at Scientific Instruments in the British Museum's collection via the Explore section of the Museum's website at www.britishmuseum.org.
- Further information on the topics covered can be found at the following website: <http://www.schoolsobservatory.org.uk>
- Students could draw on the information gathered from the workshop to make their own sundials.

Curriculum links

Science

Science Programme of Study – This workshop covers objectives in KS2 Earth and Beyond including aspects from 'Light and Shadows' and 'Earth, Sun and Moon'.

In this workshop you will learn about:

- How the Earth, Sun and Moon move.
- How we can use the sun, moon and stars to tell the time.
- What people used to tell the time before clocks were invented.

Key words

Orbit

The Earth's axis

Sunrise and Sunset

Astronomer

Observation

Nocturnal

The sun

- You will look at the way the sun moves in the sky and explore how it changes at different times of the year.
- The whole group will work together to tell the time using a sundial.

The moon

- You will look at the way the moon moves in the sky and see how long it takes to orbit the earth.
- The whole group will work together and use the light of the moon to tell the time.

The stars

- You will work in a group to find out how we can tell the time using the stars.