



Third term 2010 provides your students with a number of opportunities to watch real life examples of astronomical events which demonstrate the 'interactions ... and events in the sky' core Science learning outcomes. Telescopes aren't required to observe the viewing opportunities outlined below and they are fun for students to observe.

The highlight for this term will be the stunning gathering of the planets Mercury, Venus, Mars and Saturn above the Western horizon at the end of July and up until the middle of August. Many students aren't aware that you can see planets without a telescope and even less are aware that the word planet comes from an ancient Greek word for wandering star. Watching this gathering will nicely illustrate this definition. You will find easy to use finder charts on my website at the start of July 2010 for this event.

Don't forget this term to look for the Aboriginal constellation 'The Emu' high in the evening sky. The head is formed by what astronomers refer to as the Coal Sack Nebula located next to the Southern Cross, with the rest of the body being formed by dark nebula arching towards Scorpius. It can only be seen from dark sky locations and once you have spotted it, you will wonder why you have never noticed it before.

Finally, your students have the opportunity to send their name to Mars on NASA's next rover mission by going to http://nightskyonline.info/?page_id=425

Regards,
Paul Floyd.

Best nights for a star party in Term 3 2010

Amateur astronomical societies are generally happy to assist schools by running a star party. This means that they will bring telescopes and volunteers to your school so that your students can look through them at the night sky. Book ahead and avoid the time just between First Quarter Moon and two nights after Full Moon to avoid the light of the Moon washing out other sky objects. Using this criteria, the best nights therefore are:

- * Thursday 15 July to Saturday 17 July
- * Saturday 14 August to Monday 16 August
- * Sunday 12 September to Tuesday 14 September

A list of astronomical societies across South East Queensland can be found on the World Wide Web at http://nightskyonline.info/?page_id=397

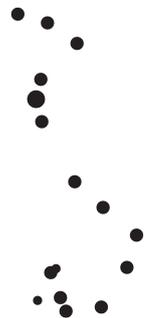
Planets visible to the eye

July / August: Mercury, Venus, Mars and Saturn will be easily visible to the unaided eye above the Western sky during and after evening twilight. They will rapidly move relative to each other (particularly at the end of July and through to the middle of August).

September: Your students can easily find Jupiter without a telescope by looking low above the Eastern horizon (after 7pm). The brightest star is Jupiter. If you aren't familiar with the sky, look for the Moon in the early evening of 23 September. The bright star to the right of the Moon will be Jupiter. From 12 - 25 September, Jupiter and Uranus will be easily visible in binoculars in the same field of view.

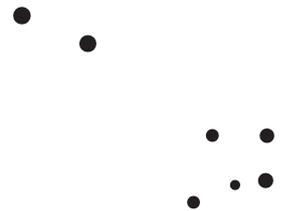
Easy Constellations

Scorpius 'The Scorpion'



Look high above the South Eastern horizon at 8 pm in mid July and 7 pm in mid August.

Crux 'The Southern Cross' and 'The Pointers'



Look above the South Western horizon at the end of evening twilight.

2010 Moon Phases



New

First Quarter

Full Moon

Last Quarter

	New	First Quarter	Full Moon	Last Quarter
July	12	18	26	5
August	10	17	25	3
September	8	15	23	2

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