

Enthusiastic Little Astronomers

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Younger primary school students often show great interest in the vast Universe hiding behind the starry night's sky, but don't have a way of learning about it and exploring it in regular classes. Some of them would search children's books, Internet or encyclopedias for information or facts they are interested in, but there are those whose hunger for knowledge would go unfulfilled.

Such students were the real initiators of our extracurricular activity called Little Astronomers. With great enthusiasm they would name everything that interests them about the Universe that we live in and I would provide the information in a fun and interactive yet acceptable way for their level of understanding.

In our class we learn about Earth and its place in the Solar System, we learn about the planets and other objects of our Solar System and about the Sun itself. We also explore the night sky using programs such as Stellarium, learning to recognize constellations and name them. Most of our activities are done using a PowerPoint presentation, YouTube videos, and Internet simulations followed by some practical work the students do themselves. Because of the lack of available materials and funds, most of materials are hand made by the teacher leading the class. We also use the school's galileoscope as often as possible. Every year the students are given the opportunity to go to an observatory in a town 90 km away so that they could gaze at the sky through the real telescope for the first time.

Our goal is to start stepping into the world of astronomy by exploring the secrets of the Universe and understanding the process of rotation and revolution of our planet and its effects on our everyday lives and also to become more aware of our own role in our part of the Universe. The hunger for knowledge and enthusiasm these students have is contagious. They are becoming more aware of their surroundings and also understanding their place in the Universe that helps them remain humble and helps them think about the consequences that our actions as humankind have on our only home that we call Earth.