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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2021 Volume IV: The Sun and Us

The Sun—the Father of All Energy for Life

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This curriculum unit focuses on the Sun and solar energy. The unit is intended for third-grade students on the Navajo Reservation but can be modified to any grade level at anywhere. It is developed for students to gain a deeper understanding of the solar energy that is radiated by the Sun and transmitted to Earth. The content of the unit begins with the introduction to the Sun, moves on to understanding the Sun’s energy and it uses, and then to cultural perspectives of the Sun. The objective of “Sun’s Energy” is a part of the science standards. Students on Navajo Reservation, who lack fossil fuel energy, can learn about solar energy, and also learn that not just fossil fuels can light up a home, cook a pizza, or store energy in battery! In addition, the activities discussed in this unit will give a cultural perspective about how the Sun is viewed by the Navajo people. Students will be involved in reading, viewing videos from YouTube, images, and listening to a guest speaker. The unit involves hands-on activities for students such as creating a solar box, make a solar panel and generate light, and show respect for the Sun and Earth.

(Developed for Science and English Language Arts, grade 3; recommended for Science and English Language Arts, grades K-12)

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