



# YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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

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## **Our Sun: Through Scientific, Cultural, and Artistic Lenses**

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by Tina Berry

I've heard people say, "We are stardust" but I wonder how many of them really understand that everything on this planet literally came from star dust. Humans have strived to understand and rationalize the Sun's and our own existence and purpose throughout history through study and observation, but also through stories, legends, and the creation of gods to explain its purpose and importance. Monoliths have been built, gods have been worshipped, and stories and beliefs have lasted through many millennia. Yet, with all the technical and scientific study, so many still don't know how a star like our Sun is born and how it can possibly assist in the creation an entire solar system.

At the end of this four-week unit students will have a more solid understanding of our Sun, the beginnings of our solar system, and how the Sun affects us on Earth. Students will recognize that civilizations and cultures all over the world have created Sun stories and myths based on their beliefs and understanding about the Sun throughout history (sometimes sharing interestingly similar characteristics). Students will research a Sun story or myth from a culture in Earth's past to share out before working as a class to create a new planet revolving around a distant star. Each student, or pair of students, will create a final Sun/star story and art project based on a culture living on the class created planet.

(Developed for Art, grades 6-12; recommended for Art, grades 6-12, and Science and English Language Arts, grades 6-9)

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