

Exploring Virgo - Activities (Ages 8-11)



Today we are going to investigate:

- A famous springtime constellation
- Why this constellation is linked to the harvest season
- Two of the constellation's brightest stars
- A famous galaxy in this constellation

Activities

- 1 The constellation Virgo is easiest to see in the springtime. It is one of the zodiac constellations and represents a maiden carrying crops from the field. Tap on the constellation's name to bring up the  to find out more information.

Question: Virgo is the second largest of the 88 constellations?

True or False?

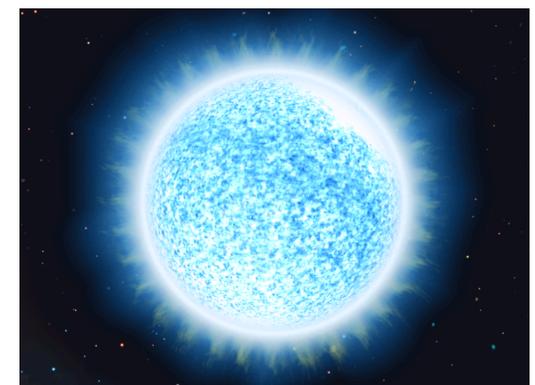
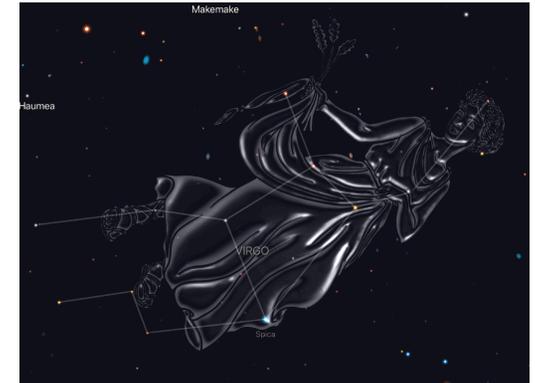
- 2 Since ancient times Virgo has been linked to harvest time. This is because the Sun moves through Virgo during the fall (or autumn) season when the crops are gathered. This means Virgo is actually in the sky during daytime in the fall. Using Night Sky you can prove this is true.

Activity: Bring up the Space Travel tile and set the date to October 8 at 9pm and confirm the Sun lies within the constellation of Virgo.

- 3 The brightest star in Virgo is named Spica which means the 'Ear of Wheat'. Although it is very far away it is a very bright star. Tap on Spica's  to find out more about this star and zoom in on Spica for a close up look

Question: What type of star is Spica?

- a) Brown dwarf b) Red Giant c) Blue Giant



Exploring Virgo (Ages 8-11)

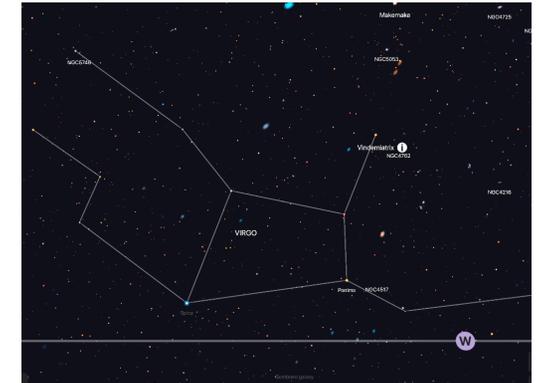


- 4 Go to the upper part of Virgo and find the yellow star Vindemiatrix. In folklore this star is linked to a fruit and the meaning of its name reflects this. Tap on the  icon

Question: What does the Latin name Vindemiatrix mean?

- 5 Scientist are very interested in Virgo as it is full of galaxies. Galaxies are giant collections of gas, dust and billions of stars. One of them, called Messier 104, has a nickname connected to something you wear on your head. Using Search, type in Messier 104 to find the answer to this question.

Question: What is the nickname for Messier 104?



What we have discovered:

- Virgo is a large constellation best viewed in springtime
- Ancient people associated Virgo with the time of year for harvesting crops
- The names of two bright stars in Virgo and their meaning
- Virgo is a great constellation to spot galaxies

★ ★ Well done!
You're a Night Sky
Superstar! ★ ★