

Moon for the Month

This activity accompanies “Sunset,” from *The Complete Poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar* by Paul Laurence Dunbar, record number 4977.

Activity Title: Moon for the Month

Description: The students will track how the moon changes over the course of a month or one lunar cycle.

Subject: Science

Skill: Earth and Space Science – The moon

Behavioral Objective:

- The student will describe the changes in the observable shape of the moon over the course of one lunar cycle (about a month).

Materials:

- “Sunset” poem, available in audio and print form at <http://etc.usf.edu/lit2go/>
- Paper and pencils
- Moon journal
 - For each student: one piece of black construction paper, 8 pieces of notebook paper
 - Stapler
 - Chalk

Procedures:

Read the poem with the class, or have the students read it on their own. Ask the students if they know what a crescent moon is (like the one mentioned in the poem.)

Next watch the following video clip about why the moon changes shape (about one minute long):

http://www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/topnav/materials/listbytype/Why_Does_the_Shape.html

Then, have your students create a moon journal to keep track of how the moon looks over the next 28-30 days.

For the moon journal, give each student one sheet of black construction paper and 8 sheets of notebook paper. Have the students put the notebook paper on top of the black construction paper and fold it in half, creating a booklet (black paper on the outside). Staple the folded edge of the notebook so it stays together. Next, have the students decorate their moon journal. Instruct the students to take their moon journal home and draw a picture of how the



moon looks every night for the next 28-30 nights. For extra credit they can look up and write the name of the phase of the moon next to the picture.

Over the 28-30 days discuss with the students how the moon changes and what causes these changes.

