

The Secret Galaxy

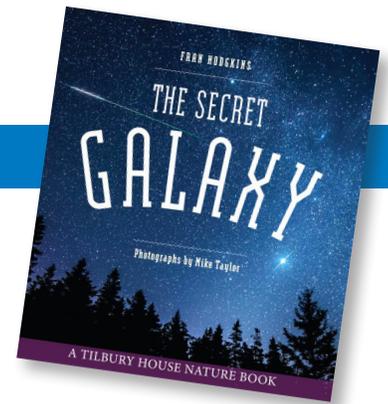
A RIF GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Themes: Astronomy, Stars, Planets, Space

Book Brief: What do you see when you look into the night sky? *The Secret Galaxy* explains some of the secrets of space and the universe, while also revealing that there are many mysteries yet to be solved.

Author: Fran Hodgkins

Photographer: Mike Taylor



TIME TO READ!



Before reading, build background: What do you think of when you see the word “galaxy”? Why do you think the author describes a galaxy as secret? Have you ever heard of the Milky Way? Can you see a lot of stars when you look at the sky at night?

While reading, respond to text: Which “folktale” about the Milky Way is most interesting? Did you like

the author using the Milky Way as the narrator in the book? Why or why not?

After reading, ask questions:

- ◆ What fact about our galaxy was most surprising to you?
- ◆ What three elements do we need to survive that can be found in stars?
- ◆ How does mass affect star life?
- ◆ How would you describe a black hole?
- ◆ Would you ever want to travel to outer space? Why or why not?

RELATED ACTIVITIES

METEOR MUNCHIES

Ingredients: rice cereal, marshmallows, butter, large pot

Meteors are small bits of dirt or rock that can be seen when they pass through Earth’s atmosphere. To make meteor munchies, follow the directions on the cereal box for making rice cereal treats. Instead of pressing the warm treats into a pan, let them cool a little and then roll them into different sized meteors. You can take these as a treat to snack on when you go galaxy gazing!

GALAXY IN A JAR

Materials: clear jar, 1 bottle clear hair gel, 1 bottle purple dishwashing liquid, glitter

Squeeze hair gel to fill half of the jar. Add dishwashing liquid until almost full. Add more hair gel until full. Add glitter; use multiple colors for the best results. Top off with dishwashing liquid. Screw on lid and shake well to combine liquids. What connections can you make between your galaxy jar and the Milky Way?

GALAXY GAZING

Choose a night that’s clear, not cloudy. Grab a blanket and head outside with family or friends for a night of galaxy gazing. Download the free app **Sky View** for help identifying the constellations you see.

DIGITAL LITERACY

Explore the online book *Hot Stories of Cool Science* at: http://chandra.harvard.edu/edu/hot_stories.html.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

OTHER BOOKS BY THIS AUTHOR

Little Loon (2015)

Who’s Been Here: A Tale in Tracks (2008)

Andre the Famous Harbor Seal (2003)



Reading Is Fundamental