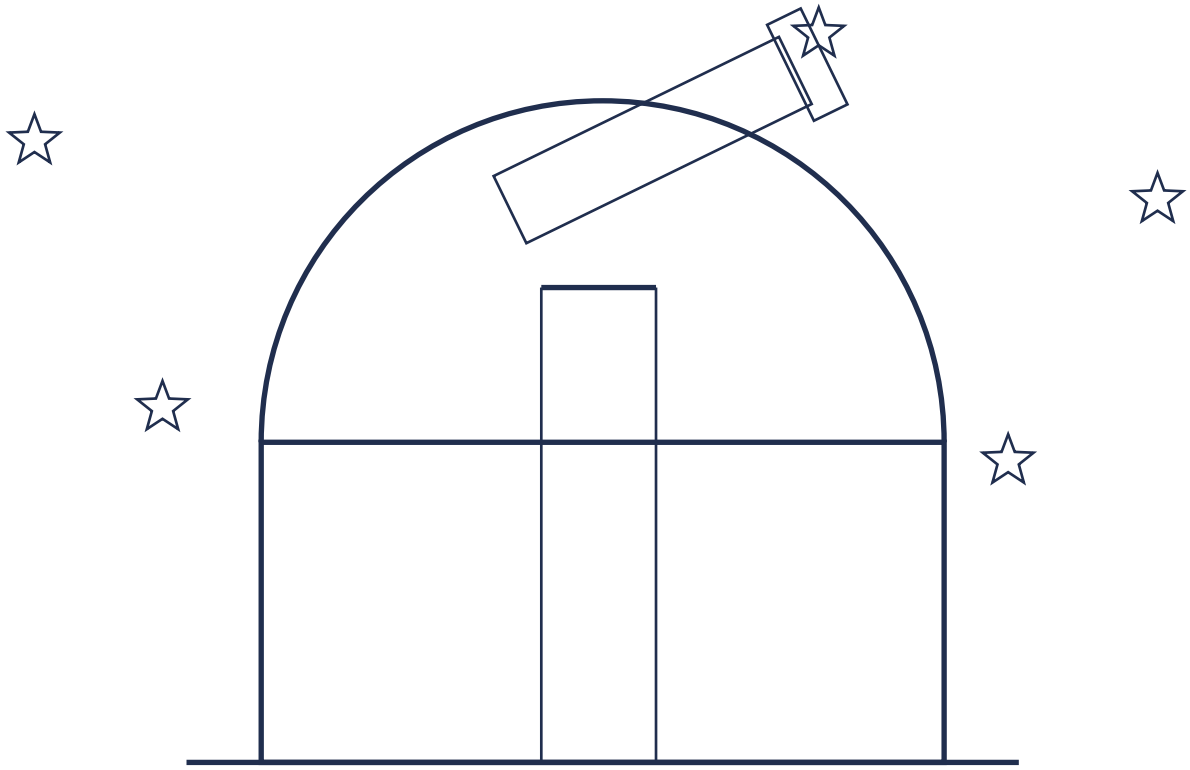
FREE PRACTICE SAMPLER / AGES 9-10

First watch at the Midnight Observatory



ONE COMPLETE NAVIGATION CHALLENGE

Follow a drifting star chart and recover a hidden word. This standalone training exercise uses a different message from the complete adventure and reveals none of its final-console answers.

2-6 CHILDREN / ADULT-LED / LEVEL 3 OF 3

About 5-10 minutes; an estimate, not a play-tested duration.

SAMPLER / ADULT SETUP

Prepare a training watch

PREPARE

Print page 3 in your paper size. Keep page 4 for the adult. Gather a pencil and scrap paper, or let children answer by pointing. No cutting, hiding, telescope, phone or astronomy knowledge is needed. Black-and-white printing works.

READ ALOUD

"Welcome to your first watch. Our practice star chart has drifted. Follow the navigation instructions to recover its five-letter message. One person directs, one follows and one checks. You may ask for help whenever you want."

SHARE THE WORK

For 2 children, combine directing and checking. For 3, take one role each. For 4-6, form pairs for the three roles. Rotate roles after two moves so everyone has an invitation to contribute. The adult reads all rules and may trace or write for the team.

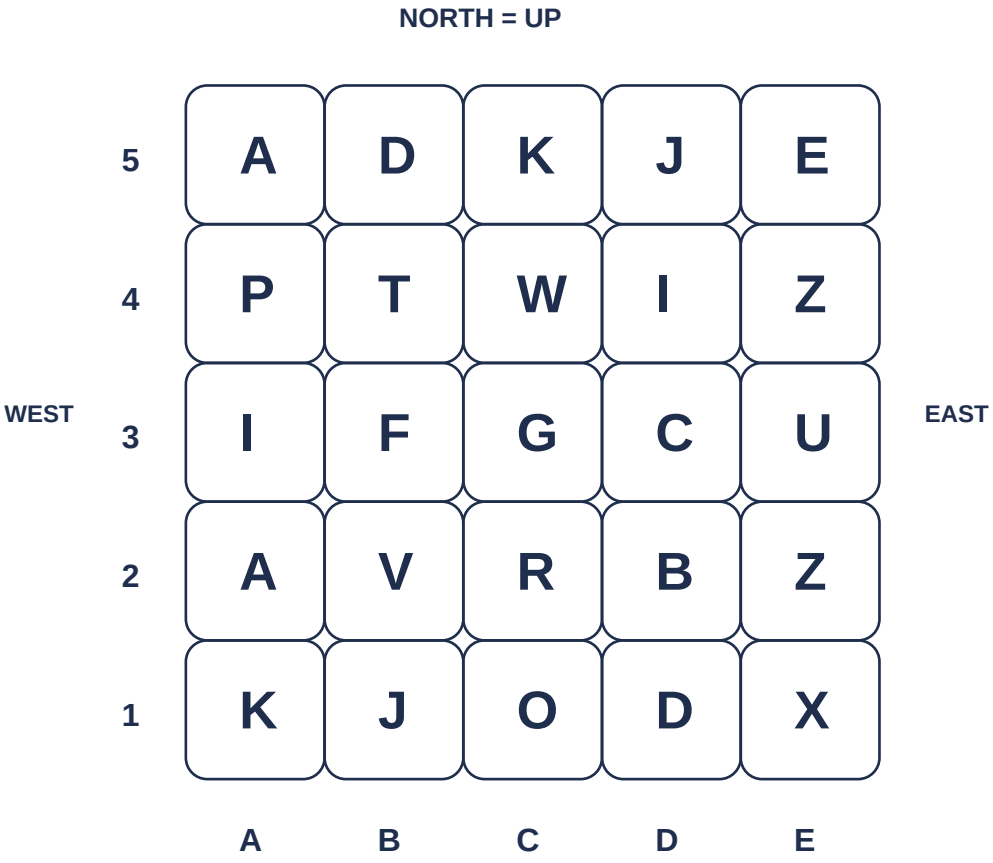
FINISH

Allow 5-10 minutes, with breaks as needed; this is an estimate. Hints and the exact solution are on page 4. Read its brief ending when solved. This sampler is a complete activity and does not require a purchase to finish.

PRACTICE MISSION / NAVIGATION

The drifting star chart

Start at A1. For each instruction, move the stated number of squares, then record ONLY the letter on the square where you stop. Keep moving from that square.



1	2	3	4	5
EAST 2 squares	NORTH 1 squares	EAST 1 squares	NORTH 2 squares	WEST 2 squares

Do not record the starting letter or any square you pass through. Read the five stopping letters in order. What word does the chart reveal?

Share it: one child directs, one follows, one checks each stopping square.

SAMPLER / ADULT SOLUTION

Your first watch is complete

EXACT ROUTE & ANSWER

A1 east 2 -> C1 (O).
C1 north 1 -> C2 (R).
C2 east 1 -> D2 (B).
D2 north 2 -> D4 (I).
D4 west 2 -> B4 (T).
Stopping letters spell ORBIT. Record only the square where each instruction ends; do not record A1 or any square you pass through.

HINT LADDER

Hint 1: "A1 is at the bottom left; east means right."
Hint 2: "Two squares east takes you to C1, which shows O. Start the next move there."
Support: guide each move together, counting only squares entered, not the square you start on.

READ THE ENDING: “ORBIT! The practice chart is steady again. Your crew listened, checked and worked as one. Dr Vale awards you a quiet salute: your first watch is complete.”
Optional challenge: reverse your five moves and return to A1.