

**SPECIAL REPORT**

# COUNT THE STARS

Cain Scrimgeour

IF you're out in the evening in February, don't forget to look up. This is the month when you might see a mighty hunter, a queen, a dragon or a giraffe after dark! These are, of course, patterns formed by the stars, known as constellations.

## COUNTING STARS IN FEBRUARY

CPRE, the countryside charity, is running a Star Count this month, and it's easy to take part. Don't worry, you don't have to count all the stars in the sky – just the ones in the constellation of Orion!

### LOOK FOR ORION (pictured, right)

Orion, the hunter, is a gigantic figure in the sky. He wears a belt with a sword, and he holds a club and a shield.

To find him, look for the three bright stars in a row that make up his belt. Then find the four stars that form a rectangle around them: these include an orange star called Betelgeuse on the top left and a blue one called Rigel on the bottom right. All you need to do now is count all the stars inside that rectangle, not including the four 'corner' stars.



Bob Mizon

## WHEN TO SEARCH FOR STARS

The best nights for the CPRE Star Count are between Friday 21 and Friday 28 February. During this time the moon is less bright, so it's easier to see the stars. But CPRE will accept your counts from any night in the last two weeks of February.



Mackenzie NNP

You don't need a telescope: this is all about what you can see with just your eyes.

### SHARE YOUR RESULTS

You can then send your results to CPRE using the website address below. They'll make a map to show where the best places are to see a wonderful, starry sky. This will also show those places that are poor for stargazing because of light pollution: that means the glow



of streetlamps and other electric lights makes it hard to see the stars.

### WHY IS LIGHT POLLUTION BAD FOR US?

Light pollution is bad for us as it can stop us sleeping properly, making us ill. It's also bad for birds, insects and other animals, as it confuses them when they are trying to find food or move around. But there are ways to stop it, and by showing on a map where it's most serious, CPRE can help people who work in local councils decide what to do about it.

How many stars can you see in Orion?  
#StarCount

CPRE'S STAR COUNT  
21st - 28th February 2020

The countryside charity  
CPRE

## WHAT ELSE CAN YOU SEE?

SOME other constellations to look out for...

Cassiopeia is another easy constellation to recognise, as it is shaped like a W. It's named after a mythical Ethiopian queen, who is usually pictured sitting on her throne.

Draco is linked with many myths about dragons, including one of the monsters that Hercules met during his 12 tasks or 'labours'.

Camelopardalis is a giraffe. The long-necked animal was once known as a Camelopard, as it looked a bit like a camel with the spots of a leopard.

Find out more at [cpre.org.uk/starcount](http://cpre.org.uk/starcount).

Make sure you take a responsible adult with you if you are out after dark.



**GLOSSARY**

**CPRE** — The countryside charity. The charity aims to make the countryside a better place for everyone to live, work and enjoy

**Orion** — A hunter in Greek mythology

**Hercules** — One of the best known heroes in Greek and Roman mythology. He is renowned for his courage and immense physical strength. However, he killed his beloved wife and children while under a spell that made him temporarily insane. Even though he wasn't to blame for the crime, Hercules completed 12 tasks to make amends and achieve immortality

**Questions on Special Report: 'Count the stars'**

**Part A: Find and explain the facts**

**A1.** Fill the gaps in order to complete the sentences.

CPRE, the countryside charity, is running a \_\_\_\_\_ Count this month. To take part, you have to count the stars in the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_. You don't need a \_\_\_\_\_: it is all about what you can see with just your eyes. Find out more at \_\_\_\_\_.

**A2.** Describe Orion.

**A3.** Number the sentences 1-4 in order to show how you find Orion in the sky.

Count all the stars inside the rectangle, not including the four 'corner' stars.	
Look for the three bright stars in a row that make up his belt.	
Find the four stars that form a rectangle around them.	
These include an orange star called Betelgeuse on the top left and a blue one called Rigel on the bottom right.	

**A4.** Some other constellations to look out for are: Cassiopeia, Draco and Camelopardalis. Answer the following questions about them.

What is Cassiopeia shaped like?	
What is Cassiopeia named after?	
What is Draco linked with?	
What is Camelopardalis?	

**A5.** What is light pollution?

**Part B: Deduce and infer information**

**B1.** Why do you think that CPRE is running a Star Count?

**B2.** Why is light pollution bad for us?

**B3.** When are the best nights for the CPRE Star Count?

**B4.** Suggest why the charity is accepting counts from any night in the last two weeks of February.

**B5.** Look at the information at the bottom. Why do you think it tells readers to: "Make sure you take a responsible adult with you if you are out after dark"?

**Part C: Analyse the writing and presentation**

**C1.** Analyse the CPRE logo.

**C2.** How is language used to reassure readers that it is easy to take part in the Star Count? Give evidence to support your answer.

**Part D: Writing task**

Imagine that you are a representative from CPRE. Write a speech for a school assembly in which you try to persuade students to take part in the Star Count.



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**Questions on Special Report: 'Count the stars'**

**Part A: Find and explain the facts**

**A1.** Fill the gaps in order to complete the sentences.

CPRE, the countryside charity, is running a ..... Count this month. To take part, you have to count the stars in the ..... of ..... You don't need a ..... : it is all about what you can see with just your eyes. Find out more at .....

**A2.** Describe Orion.

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**Part B: Deduce and infer information**

B1. Why do you think that CPRE is running a Star Count?

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B2. Why is light pollution bad for us?

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B4. Suggest why the charity is accepting counts from any night in the last two weeks of February.

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## Teacher Answers

**AIM OF THE NEWS COMPREHENSIONS:** News reports are unique non-fiction texts. Being real, they naturally engage students, and with the range of topics that are covered, help to develop pupils’ knowledge and understanding of the wider world outside the classroom. The reports are ideal for short, focused comprehension or discussion activities. Along with the opportunity to find fascinating facts and appreciate the opinions of those involved, there is plenty to be inferred and deduced to understand in more depth what is being reported. Like authors, journalists play with language, so news ‘stories’ are rich nuggets of text to investigate and provide the opportunity for literacy programmes.

**TEACHER ANSWER GUIDE:** The teacher answers are intended to provide a guide to the reading skill each question is practising. Suggestions are given for a starting point for responses that students would be expected to give at the start of KS3. Further suggestions then give fuller, more developed responses that students will work towards by the end of KS3, in preparation for the non-fiction elements of GCSE English language.

### Part A

#### A1. Fill the gaps in order to complete the sentences.

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

*Possible answer*

*Starting point — some information correctly identified*

*Developed response — information correctly identified*

CPRE, the countryside charity, is running a **Star** Count this month. To take part, you have to count the stars in the **constellation** of **Orion**. You don’t need a **telescope**: it is all about what you can see with just your eyes. Find out more at [cpre.org.uk/starcount](http://cpre.org.uk/starcount)

#### A2. Describe Orion.

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

*Possible answer*

*Starting point*

- Orion the hunter is a gigantic figure in the sky, known as a constellation.

*Development*

- He wears a belt with a sword and he holds a club and a shield.

#### A3. Number the sentences 1-4 in order to show how you find Orion in the sky.

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

*Possible answer*

*Expected response*

Count all the stars inside the rectangle, not including the four ‘corner’ stars.	4
Look for the three bright stars in a row that make up his belt.	1
Find the four stars that form a rectangle around them.	2
These include an orange star called Betelgeuse on the top left and a blue one called Rigel on the bottom right.	3

#### A4. Some other constellations to look out for are: Cassiopeia, Draco and Camelopardalis. Answer the following questions about them.

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

*Possible answer*

*Starting point — some information correctly identified*

*Developed response — information correctly identified and clearly explained*

What is Cassiopeia shaped like?	It is shaped like a W.
What is Cassiopeia named after?	It’s named after a mythical Ethiopian queen, who is usually pictured sitting on her throne.
What is Draco linked with?	Draco is linked with many myths about dragons, including one of the monsters that Hercules met during his 12 tasks or ‘labours’.
What is Camelopardalis?	A constellation that resembles a giraffe. The long-necked animal was once known as a Camelopard, as it looked a bit like a camel with the spots of a leopard.



**A5. What is light pollution?**

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

**Possible answer****Expected response**

- Light pollution is when the glow of streetlamps and other electric lights make it hard to see the stars.

**Part B****B1. Why do you think that CPRE is running a Star Count?**

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

**Possible answer****Starting point**

- CPRE is a countryside charity and the Star Count campaign encourages people to get out to appreciate the wonders of stargazing.

**Development**

- The Star Count also promotes dark skies and raises awareness of the problems caused by light pollution. CPRE are going to use the information from the count to make a map showing where light pollution is most severe. The charity will then work with local councils to help them to do something about it.

**B2. Why is light pollution bad for us?**

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

**Possible answer****Starting point**

- Light pollution is bad for us because it can stop us from sleeping properly, and lack of sleep over a prolonged period can make us ill.

**Development**

- It's also bad for birds, insects and other animals, as it confuses them when they are trying to find food or move around.

**B3. When are the best nights for the CPRE Star Count?**

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

**Possible answer****Starting point**

- The best nights for the CPRE Star Count are between Friday 21 and Friday 28 February.

**Development**

- This is because it will be easier to see the stars on these days. The moon will be less bright, so it will be easier to see the light from the stars and to count them accurately.

**B4. Suggest why the charity is accepting counts from any night in the last two weeks of February.**

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

**Possible answer****Starting point**

- It is likely that the charity is accepting counts from any night in the last two weeks of February because that is only an extra four days outside the ideal time frame, so the light quality should still be good enough.

**Development**

- However, allowing an extra few days may make all the difference in terms of the number of participants. Modern lives are busy, so people might not join in with the count if the window of time to complete it is too small.

**B5. Look at the information at the bottom. Why do you think it tells readers to: "Make sure you take a responsible adult with you if you are out after dark"?**

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

**Possible answer****Starting point**

- Readers are told to take a responsible adult with them if they are out after dark because First News is aimed at young people between the ages of 7-14. It is not advisable for young people of that age to be out alone in the dark.

**Development**

- The Special Report makes readers aware of the Star Count and obviously the count has to be done after darkness has fallen. Therefore, as a responsible publication, First News has a duty to remind their young readers of the necessary safety precautions should they choose to join in.



**Part C****C1. Analyse the CPRE logo.**

READING SKILL — Identify benefits of text organisation and presentation

**Possible answer****Starting point**

- The CPRE logo consists of layers of green, yellow, dark blue and light blue. The letters CPRE are in white at the bottom of the logo.

**Development**

- The colours of the logo are appropriate for a countryside charity as green is associated with grass and trees, yellow is like sand or a beach, and the blues could represent sea and sky. Furthermore, the white letters stand out against the green background and thus the name of the charity is highlighted.

**C2. How is language used to reassure readers that it is easy to take part in the Star Count? Give evidence to support your answer.**

READING SKILL — Recognise effect of language choices

**Possible answer****Starting point**

- Readers are told directly that “it’s easy to take part”.

**Development**

- Readers are also told: “Don’t worry”. The use of the imperative is reassuring because readers are instructed not to worry about having to count every star in the sky. It makes it seem as if they have to obey the command.
- The phrase “All you need to do...” makes involvement in the scheme seem easy too, because it sounds like there isn’t much that readers need to concern themselves with.
- Readers don’t need any specialist equipment either. They “just” need their eyes. The adverb “just” means simply. Readers simply need to use their eyes. This makes it all seem very straightforward.

**Part D – writing task**

**Imagine that you are a representative from CPRE. Write a speech for a school assembly in which you try to persuade students to take part in the Star Count.**

READING SKILL — Develop personal ideas from reading news stories

**Possible answer**

Good morning students,

I’m here from CPRE, the countryside charity, to tell you about our Star Count and how you can get involved. Once you’ve heard all about it, I’m sure you’ll be keen to join in. It’s really easy. All that you have to do is find the Orion constellation and count the stars in it. It is in the shape of a gigantic figure wearing a belt and carrying a sword. It is also holding a club and a shield. Once you have found it and counted the stars, then send your results to us via our website and we’ll make a map.

Being outside in the dark, looking at the stars is a wonderful experience. You don’t need a telescope or any other specialist equipment. Just open your eyes and look up!

What’s the point? Well, apart from being a fun experience, your results will also help us to identify and address areas of light pollution. Light pollution is bad for us and for birds, insects and other animals. It can stop us from sleeping properly and confuses animals when they are trying to find food or move around. However, there are ways to stop it... and you can help. If you send us the results of your count then we can identify areas where light pollution is most serious and plot them on our map. Then we can work with local councils in order to do something about it.

The best nights for the CPRE Star Count are between Friday 21 and Friday 28 February because the moon is less bright, so you’ll be able to see the stars more easily. However, don’t worry if you can’t do it then because we will accept counts from any night in the last two weeks of February.

If you are interested and want to know more, see me at the end of this assembly or ask your teacher for our website address.

Let’s reach for the stars together! Thanks for listening and have a great day.