



Yale-New Haven  
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1996 Volume VI: Selected Topics in Astronomy and Space Studies

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## **Time, Distance and Modern Technology in the Measurement of the Heavens**

Guide for Curriculum Unit 96.06.09  
by Luis Recalde

This curriculum unit integrates math, science, language and social studies, placing astronomy as the center of focus. One of the ways to insure the meaningful participation of the students in activities in this unit is to give them relevant hands-on experiences that would help them visualize concepts and processes. Examples are given where we can see the clarification of astronomical problems by means of models and projects. Teachers and administrators have to model teamwork in order for the student to follow these examples.

It is crucial to develop teamwork skills in the students to get results compatible with our goals and objectives. Astronomical projects are fun projects to take on with the students and with other teachers. The scientific method and writing skills are emphasized while these projects are developing. The Solar System has great surprises for students and teachers alike. The building of a model of the Solar System using scales requires much support from parents, teachers and administrators. It is also a great opportunity to build those basic skills in math, science, language and social studies. Our galaxy is a marvelous place to be in and to learn about. The Aztecs of Mexico saw the Heavens as a huge wheel of fire. Fire gives life. When we use our modern telescopes we could actually see that the stars are made up of fire and energy. When this energy runs out, life goes too. Life on Earth is a wonderful miracle. The fire of the Sun sustains this life and this miracle. Students want to know more about the uniqueness of life on Earth.

(Recommended for Mathematics, grades 5-8; Social Studies, grades 4-5; and Science, grades 3-8)

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