



*Explore the stars
from a cowboy's
point of view!*

Running time: 37:00
Grade level: 4-12 and
general public audiences



The Cowboy Astronomer is a skillfully woven tapestry of star tales and Native American legends, combined with constellation identification, star-hopping, and astronomy tidbits — all told from the unique viewpoint of a cowboy astronomer who has traveled the world plying his trade and learning the sky along the way.

The show begins with the cowboy's reminiscences of boyhood experiences on a cattle ranch. There he learned about Polaris, the North Star from a wily old ranch hand. He also learns the story of how the seven Indian maidens became the Pleiades — running from the grizzliest bear they'd ever seen — and how Devil's Tower got created in the process.



We hear the voice of a Native American storyteller recounting the legend of how Fisher — also known as the Big Dipper — got into the sky. The cowboy regales the audience with a wide range of other star tales, explaining along the way the processes of star birth and star death, and how stars' temperatures and colors are related. Throughout the show, he uses examples from many different cultures to identify familiar celestial objects and constellations, and demonstrate how humans have studied the sky throughout time.



The show closes with a touching tribute to a husband and wife team of astronomers who both studied the night sky and hoped to find their place among the stars. In the last scene, the cowboy astronomer invites everyone to enjoy the sublime beauty of the night sky and find their own place in the universe.

There's never been a program like *The Cowboy Astronomer*. It's a fresh new perspective in the planetarium medium; a unique, different, and thoroughly entertaining show unlike anything you've seen or heard before. It'll make your audiences laugh, it'll tug at their heart strings — all the while teaching about the universe and humanity's relationship with the stars.



Narrated by Baxter Black
Written by Carolyn Collins Petersen
Produced by Mark C. Petersen
Original artwork by Tim W. Kuzniar

The Cowboy Astronomer is an original work
commissioned in 1993 by the Campbell County School District
for the Sage Valley Junior High School Planetarium
of Gillette, Wyoming.





Science Education Content

The educational focus of the show is to present basic sky lore and astronomy information to a general audience from a unique viewpoint. A set of multicultural and multidisciplinary themes are woven throughout the program. These ideas help relate the information presented in the show to the lives of students, families, and the general public.

Show content is relevant in the following subject areas:

Earth and Space Sciences:

- Objects in the sky: stars, constellations, the Orion Nebula, the Andromeda Galaxy, the Pleiades star cluster, the Crab Nebula supernova, the explosion of Supernova 1987a, the Cygnus X-1 black hole, the highly variable Eta Carinae
- Changes in the sky: diurnal motion of the stars; seasonal changes in the sky
- The Orion Nebula, Betelgeuse, the Crab Nebula supernova, Supernova 1987a, Eta Carinae

Physical Science:

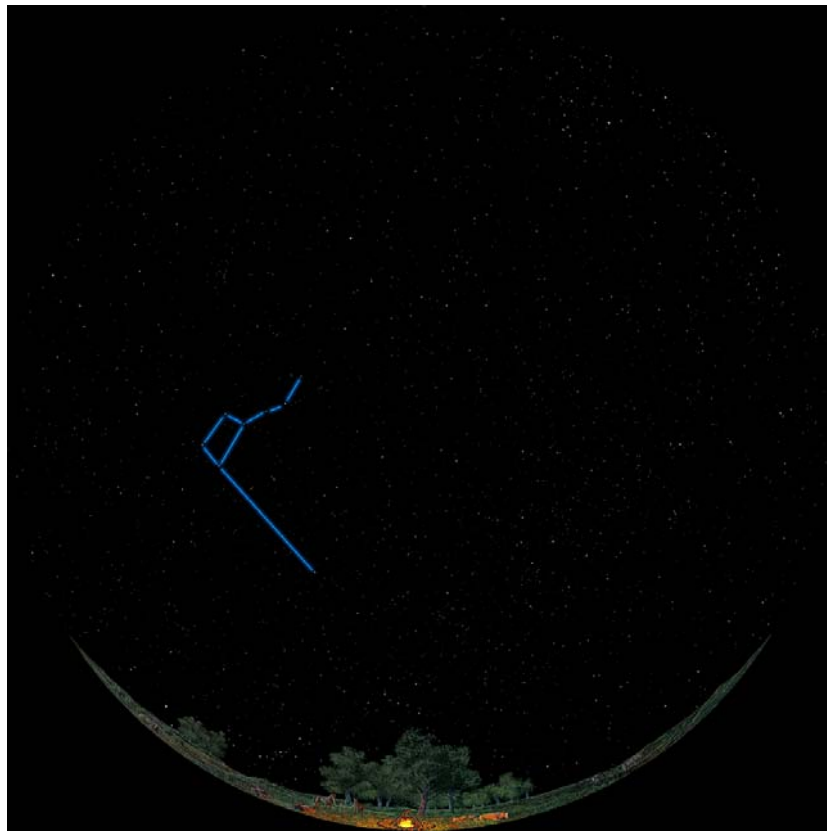
- Properties of stars

History of Science/Science Inquiry:

- Historical and cultural perspectives on astronomy: star legends of different cultures and countries, including Native American, Germany, ancient Arabic, Polynesian, and Greek tales, mainstream American, British poetry related to astronomy
- Astronomy as an enjoyable hobby or profession

This show adheres to principles put forth in the National Academy of Sciences' Education Standards published in 1996. For more details, visit the NAS Standards Web site at: <http://books.nap.edu/html/nse/html/index.html>.

Using the Big Dipper and Polaris to keep track of time, out on the wide open prairie...



... just one of the ~65,000 dome master frames in this show.



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