Directions: Read the story “The Stars Below Me” in the March/April 2019 issue of Storyworks. Then follow the steps below, which will lead you on a research journey inspired by the story.

**STEP 1:** Reread the first page of the story. Think about why Mara likes looking up at the night sky with her telescope. Then consider the following question:

**What can we learn by studying stars, planets, and other objects in space?**

That is the big question that will guide your research. Start by getting some background from these resources:

- [https://spaceplace.nasa.gov](https://spaceplace.nasa.gov)
- [https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/astronomy#all](https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/astronomy#all)

**STEP 2:** To further explore the question, choose one of the two research paths below.

### Research Path 1

Choose an object in space and find out what scientists have learned about its characteristics.

You can choose:

- a specific star (e.g., our sun)
- a specific planet (e.g., Mercury)
- the moon
- or go online to find another space object!

### Research Path 2

Choose an astronomer (from either the past or today) and learn about his or her work.

You can choose:

- Galileo
- Edwin Hubble
- Aomawa Shields
- or go online to find another astronomer!

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**STEP 3:** Think about the questions you'll need to answer to complete your project. Then start to hunt for answers! Visit your school or public library and ask your librarian or your teacher to help you find **nonfiction books** about your topic. You can also search for information online—but make sure you’re using trustworthy resources, such as **online encyclopedias, well-known newspapers and magazines, and government websites.** Here are some sites that can help get you started on your research path:

- https://www.ted.com/talks/aomawa_shields_how_we_ll_find_life_on_other_planets#t-27077

**STEP 4:** Turn the information you’ve collected into a dazzling final product!
Select one of the choices below:

**Choices for Research Path 1:**

1) Design a trivia game with questions that test people’s knowledge about your chosen space object. (Make sure to write the answers too!)
2) Imagine that a group of lucky travelers is blasting off to space to see the object up close. Using the online program ReadWriteThink Printing Press, create a travel brochure with images and text that tell them what to expect.
3) Write a poem or song about the object that celebrates its different features.

**Choices for Research Path 2:**

1) Imagine that your town is putting up a statue to honor your chosen astronomer. Write a short description for a plaque telling people about the person and his or her accomplishments.
2) Create a painting or drawing of the astronomer at work. Include at least three captions explaining what he or she is doing in the illustration.
3) Pretend that the astronomer is being interviewed about his or her work on a radio news show. Work with a partner to write and record both the interviewer’s questions and the astronomer’s answers.