

Too Bright at Night?

Lesson Title: Too Bright at Night?

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Part 1: The Problems with Light

Have you ever thought about what it was like at night before electric lights were invented? People relied on candlelight, and later light from gas lamps to illuminate the night. Today, in our cities and towns, it is very difficult to find a place that is truly dark at night. While this is certainly convenient, it has created unexpected problems, particularly for astronomers. Read the following articles on the Internet to find out why.



- **Blinded by the light** <http://whyfiles.org/shorties/055darksky/index.html>
- **Light Pollution** <http://www.astrosociety.org/education/publications/tnl/44/lightpoll.html>
- **Ontario Hydro Leaflet on Light Pollution** <http://www.darksky.org/infoshts/is065.html>

As you read, think about the following questions and prepare to discuss these with your class. You may want to take notes in your science notebook.

- What are some of the reasons that the night sky is “brightening?”
- Is all of this brightening necessary?
- What problems are caused by excessive lighting of the night sky?
- Who or what is being affected? What are some of the problems for animals?
- Can anything be done about it?
- How would reducing light pollution save money?
- Is there a solution that would still enable us to provide nighttime illumination for those who need it?

Part 2: Bright Rewards and Risks

Now that you’ve had a chance to learn a little more about light pollution, fill out the chart below. In the first column list some of the benefits of brighter nights for people and societies. In the second column, list some of the drawbacks or negative effects.

Rewards of Brighter Nights	Risks of Brighter Nights

