SUNRISE

Into the Sun 3D

Teaching the Sun, Astronomy, and Science through 3D simulation

Lesson
Teaching the Sun, science, and astronomy through 3D simulation

Objectives
1) Students will gain a basic understanding of the Sun through 3D simulation and visualization,

2) Students will gain a deeper understanding of the operation the Sun.

Activity
Students travel to the Sun in real-time 3D, helping them to visualize and understand its structure and function.

Materials
Sun3D Homepage
(click or cut and paste URL into browser)
http://www.sunrisevr.com/thesun3d

3D Simulation and Investigation

3D simulations are designed to make subject matter more engaging to today's technology-savvy kids, and help them bridge the gap between the "concrete" world and the abstract world of concepts. When students experience complex subject matter in real-time 3D it becomes clearer. Students learn best when they are actively immersed in subject matter from a variety of different viewpoints; 3D simulation is designed to help students visualize difficult ideas and objects through investigation at any scale (atomic, cellular, planetary, conceptual, etc), and doing things that would normally be impossible.

Required Technology
- PC/Tablet

Optional Technology
- Projector
- Multiple Computers
- Internet Connection

Grouping
- Large Group Instruction
- Small Group Instruction

Staging
Check computer/Tablet for Internet access if needed

Procedure

1. Access program

2. Pick a lead student navigator to control movement through the 3D environment

3. Pick a lead student reader to read information about the Sun as it appears on-screen

4. Begin the lesson by asking students what they already know about the Sun; write responses on the board

5. Review basic facts about the Sun including:

- The Sun is the closest star to Earth
- The Sun sits at the center of the Solar System
- The Sun creates energy that travels out into space as heat and light

6. Start traveling through the program, facilitate discussion by asking students where the class should go.

7. Use the 3D simulation as a visual aid; explain information as needed

8. Have students pay special attention to:

- Nuclear fusion
- Temperature levels in the Sun
- Solar processes such as flares and prominences

9. Have a final wrap-up with students with a question and answer period about the Sun. Ask them where it is located, what are its distinguishing components, how we have studied it, and why it is unique in the Solar System. Ask them what parts of the Sun they found interesting.

Optional Activity: 3D Scavenger Hunt + Discussion

Have students find a particular part of Sun, such as a sunspot. If students are on multiple computers, have them "race" to the part of the planet the teacher wishes to highlight. Once students find/arrive at the location, the teacher may commence discussion. Repeat in other areas of the simulation as desired to build understanding.

Homework/Review

Students may also access the program outside the classroom to supplement textbook questions

Functional Notes

- The program is available on multiple platforms
- If using the program online, please ensure the Unity3D Player is installed on the computer; through the Internet Explorer Browser; download the latest at https://unity3d.com/webplayer.
- If you see something in **red** you can probably click on it
- For ease of use you can go through most 3D objects, and even the ground
- The school library can request and access programs (free) at www.sunrisevr.com for off-line use via PC and Mac if there is no internet connection