

Summary Reflection

ASTR 337

The theme of our course has been “Connecting with the Sky.” Through a series of both observations and measurements, we have essentially become scientists, exploring the world around us, both day and night. As we end the semester, it’s time for personal reflection on what you learned and experienced. This self-reflection is part of your learning process. It helps you retain the insights you’ve gained and will hopefully inspire you to continue seeking new opportunities for encountering and understanding the world around us.

Part I. In a two-page paper, use the first half to describe, and fundamentally explain, one phenomenon you observed and measured which surprised you and which you documented in your journal. How did that exploration help you appreciate and understand Nature in more depth? For the second half, discuss your answers to at least two questions from the following list:

- What is something we did this semester that you think you will remember for the rest of your life?
- What is something you accomplished this semester that you are proud of?
- What are the three most important things you learned this semester?
- What is something that was hard for you at the start of the semester, but is easier now?
- In what area do you feel you made your biggest improvements?
- What was your favorite part of the day in our class? Why?
- Have you covered the material you had hoped? More? Less?

Part II. Construct two “Concept Maps” that schematically summarize the fundamentals of the two sky phenomena (one daytime and one nighttime) that you most enjoyed this semester. Your maps should illustrate the underlying causes of the two phenomena and the relationships between them, such as the roles of light, measurement, and quantitative thinking. The principles of a Concept Map are described below with a sample map showing how to begin and proceed. In two classes we created such Concept Maps as practice.

A Concept Map presents the relationships among a set of connected concepts and ideas. It is a tangible way to display how your mind “sees” a particular topic. By constructing a Concept Map, you reflect on what you know and what you don’t know. In a Concept Map, the concepts, usually represented by single words enclosed in a rectangle (box), are connected to other concept boxes by arrows. A word or brief phrase, written by the arrow, defines the relationship between the connected concepts. Major concept boxes will have lines to and from several other concept boxes generating a network.

