

Mini-Research Project: The Stellar Recruiter

Phase 1: The Cosmic Crisis

The Mission: NASA has received a mysterious signal from a distant coordinate. To understand what is happening, they need to hire a specialist. However, they aren't sure which kind of scientist to hire.

Choose ONE Mystery to Research:

- **Mystery A:** A group of stars in a nearby cluster are all the same "cool" temperature, but some are 1,000 times brighter than others. We need to know if these stars are dying giants or young stars.
- **Mystery B:** A telescope has photographed a strange, "taco-shaped" cluster of stars that doesn't seem to have the spiral arms we usually see in our galaxy. We need to know how to classify it.
- **Mystery C:** We want to build a new space telescope specifically designed to find "Hot but Dim" stars that are currently invisible to our current tech.

Phase 2: The Career Search

Using your classroom resources (textbooks or approved sites), research the career that matches your mystery.

Career Name	What do they study?	Topic
Astrophysicist	Life cycles of stars and H-R data.	Star Life Cycles
Extragalactic Astronomer	Types and shapes of galaxies.	Galaxy Categories
Space Systems Engineer	Designs tools to detect light/temp.	H-R Properties

What is one interesting fact that you learned about this career?

Phase 3: The Expert Recommendation:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Write a 3-sentence hiring recommendation to NASA headquarters. You must use at least **two** vocabulary words from our lesson.

1. **Identify the Professional:** "We should hire a(n) [Career Name] to solve Mystery [A, B, or C]."
2. **Explain the Science:** "This professional is the best choice because they understand how to use [Vocabulary 1] to identify [Vocabulary 2]."
 - (Example: "...how to use the **H-R Diagram** to identify **Red Giants**.")
3. **The Goal:** "Once hired, they will help us understand [re-state the mystery in your own words]."

Put it all together:

Take It Further:

What education did they need to get there ?

To become a specialist like an astrophysicist or space systems engineer, it takes more than just an interest in space— it's about becoming an expert in how the universe works. These careers usually require years of intense university schooling, starting with a basic college degree and moving into several more years of advanced, high-level training.

How _____ Became an Expert: *Research a real scientist who matches your mystery.*

If you would like guidance, an example of what your research should look like will be shown on the board.

Scientist Chosen:	
Mystery Match: <i>Circle which one(s) apply.</i>	A/B/C
College Degrees:	