

5.1: Module Introduction

He burned his house down for the fire insurance
And spent the proceeds on a telescope
To satisfy a lifelong curiosity
About our place among the infinities

The strongest thing that's given us to see with's
A telescope. Someone in every town
Seems to me owes it to the town to keep one.
In Littleton it may as well be me.

Robert Frost
The Star-Splitter

This module introduces you to the primary instrument used by astronomers: the telescope, as well as how the telescope works. From its historical first use to today's modern instruments, the telescope changed forever how we look at our Universe.

Objectives

Upon completion of this module, the student will be able to:

- Identify the types of telescopes and telescope mounts
- Describe the differences between the refracting telescope and reflecting telescope, including both positive and negative features
- Describe the types of instruments astronomers use with the telescope and the function of each type
- Explain why space-based telescopes are of such importance to today's astronomers and the collection of information

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