

## 11.1: Module Introduction

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Children's lullabies were quite popular in decades past. Many of us learned a number of these lullabies as children, though they do not seem to be as popular today. In *Rhymes for the Nursery*, published by sisters Jane and Ann Taylor in 1806 in London was a simple rhyme about a star. Many of us have heard and even sung the first verse of what we call *Twinkle, twinkle little star*. And some of these questions in this children's lullaby are still the same astronomers and astrophysicists are asking today.

The Star

*Twinkle, twinkle little star,  
How I wonder what you are,  
Up above the world so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky.  
When the blazing sun is gone,  
When he nothing shines upon,  
Then you show your little light,  
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.  
Then the traveller in the dark,  
Thanks you for your tiny spark,  
He could not see which way to go,  
If you did not twinkle so.  
In the dark blue sky you keep,  
And often through my curtains peep,  
For you never shut your eye,  
'Till the sun is in the sky.  
As your bright and tiny spark,  
Lights the traveller in the dark.  
Though I know not what you are,  
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.  
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.  
How I wonder what you are.  
Up above the world so high,  
Like a diamond in the sky.  
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.  
How I wonder what you are.  
How I wonder what you are.*

Jane Taylor

The Star, *Rhymes for the Nursery*, 1806

This module looks at the characteristics of stars, the terminology astronomers use to describe the stars, and the types and classifications of stars.

### Objectives

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

- Identify the basic stellar characteristics
- Describe how astronomers use parallax
- Identify terms, such as light-year, parsec, stellar luminosity, and magnitude system
- Detail Stellar Types and those responsible for the development of the stellar types
- Describe how the H-R Diagram works and what it shows
- Identify the different types of binary stars and variable stars
- Differentiate between globular and open clusters

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