



## A NEW VIEW OF THE MOON

**DURATION:** 4 mins | **DIRECTOR:** Wylie Overstreet

Wylie Overstreet was hanging out in his L.A. apartment one night and, out of boredom, decided to take his high-powered telescope out to the street to peer at the moon. Pretty soon people began wandering up and asking him what he was up to. When he showed them, they nearly fell over in awe. A New View of the Moon is just the reminder we need to keep looking up. Because as Galileo said, back in 1610, “it’s a beautiful and wondrous sight to behold the body of the moon.”



## STANDARDS

*Common Core Anchor Standards for Writing addressed in this lesson:*

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.6 (Production and Distribution of Writing)**  
Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.8 (Research to Build and Present Knowledge)**  
Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

*Common Core Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening addressed in this lesson:*

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1 (Comprehension and Collaboration)**  
Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.5 (Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas)**  
Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

**TAGS:** Sense of wonder, humanity, moon, lunar, telescope

**VOCABULARY:** Telescope, lunar, moon

## FILMMAKER INTERVIEW: WYLIE OVERSTREET



### WHY DID YOU BECOME A FILMMAKER AND HOW DID YOU GET STARTED?

I became a filmmaker because I was drawn to it from an early age, and I got started by brute force. The closest I'd been to production prior to our *To Scale* films was a college course on film theory, and the only thing I remember from it was the professor was weird. But one day when I was 29 I had an idea for a short film, and unlike so many of my ideas, this one was worth doing. So began the arduous endeavor of learning how to make a film. I relied on the expertise of others and my own plucky research to guide my education, pairing them with thousands of hours in the editing room making mistakes and attempting to fix them. As the months wore on, I got better. Then one day nearly a year later I had the film I wanted to make, and people were starting to call me a "filmmaker." It was weird. Still is.

### HOW DID YOU BECOME INTERESTED IN ASTRONOMY?

I never was drawn to science or astronomy growing up or through my education. But in my late twenties, I discovered books by science communicators like Carl Sagan and Stephen Hawking and everything changed. In these books science and astronomy were not presented as factoids and terminology, but as a story. That's when I fell in love with it. Astronomy reveals the cosmic perspective to us, and that changes how you see everything.

### WHEN EDITING THE FILM, WAS THERE ANYTHING YOU WISHED YOU COULD HAVE INCLUDED IN THE FINAL CUT?

Yes, more reactions. The film shows perhaps 5% of all the reactions captured, we left out so many that were still so good. A few people were impressed to the point of simply saying nothing, mouth open. That's fun to observe in person, but it's a hard reaction to portray in a short film.



### WHEN YOU MADE THE FILM, DID YOU HAVE A SPECIFIC AUDIENCE IN MIND?

Yes, I made this film for the specific audience of humankind. That may seem inherently unspecific, but we subdivide ourselves in so many ways with so many labels that to consider ourselves as one people is exceedingly rare. I wanted this to be a reminder that that is exactly what we are: “Human” is the only label that matters, now and forever. All others are illusions. Our future depends upon realizing this.

### IS THERE AN ACTION YOU HOPE PEOPLE ARE INSPIRED TO TAKE AFTER SEEING THIS FILM?

Go outside and look up. Even without a telescope; drive out into the darkness an hour or so and just star-gaze. Contemplate the universe. It’s the most amazing thing you’ll ever encounter, and you are it and it is you.

### WHAT ARE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES YOU ENCOUNTERED WHILE MAKING THIS FILM?

People thinking we were going to prank them. People thinking we were going to charge them money. People generally being weirded out by some dude asking them to come look at the moon. Oh, and getting good audio. Mic placement is tricky when you’re shooting candid.

### WHAT’S THE NEXT BIG ADVENTURE OR FILM PROJECT ON THE HORIZON FOR YOU?

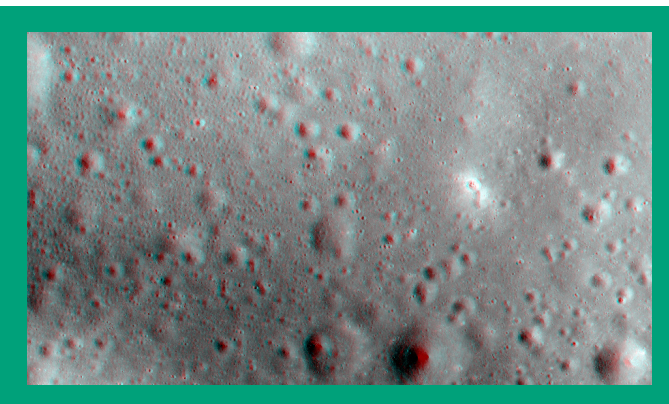
We’ve just finished shooting our next film in the *To Scale*: series, *To Scale: TIME*, which aims to present the history of the universe in a physical scale model. We’re pretty excited about it.

### WHAT IS ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU CAN GIVE STUDENTS THAT YOU WISH SOMEONE HAD SHARED WITH YOU?

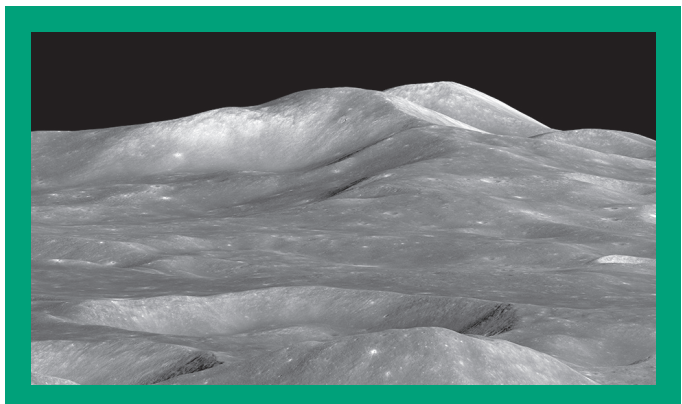
Don’t be intimidated. From the outside filmmaking can look like incomprehensible wizardry requiring years of film school and huge sums of money before you can even attempt it. It’s not. You don’t need any of those things. With diligence and practice, anyone can learn. Don’t be scared to start.

## PRE-SCREENING ACTIVITY

*A New View of the Moon*, shows people’s reactions in downtown LA in response to viewing the moon from a telescope. “The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera, LROC, is a system of three cameras mounted on the Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter (LRO) that capture high resolution black and white images and moderate resolution multi-spectral images of the lunar surface.” Here is the link to their up-to-date images: <http://lroc.sese.asu.edu/images>.



Sample image from LROC, 06 Sept 2018



Sample image from LROC, 15 Jun 2018

Since the images are relatively abstract and aren’t lunar-specific (until reading the sub-headers), choose one or two and cover up any information about the images. This activity is meant to spark curiosity in your students prior to watching *A New View of the Moon*. Depending on what images you decide to use with your class, you will follow the same procedures for the partner activity, as outlined on the next page.



## PROCEDURE FOR PARTNER DISCUSSION:

1. Split students into pairs. Have partners decide who is going to be “Partner A” and who is going to be “Partner B.”
2. Display image from LROC, covering up any information that shows they are from the moon.
3. “Partner A” will talk uninterrupted for 30 seconds about the picture, pretending to be an expert and explaining everything they know about this picture to “Partner B.” Encourage students to be confident about what they are saying, as there is no wrong answer.
4. While “Partner A” is talking, “Partner B” is listening closely, because they will be asked to repeat everything “Partner A” said back to “Partner A.” When the timer goes off, “Partner B” will summarize what “Partner A” stated. “Partner B” will start by saying, “What I heard you say...”
5. Switch and it is “Partner B’s” turn to be the “expert” about the next image. “Partner A” will restate what “Partner B” said.
6. When both students have had the opportunity to be the expert, read the subheaders to the students from the images. Let them know about LROC’s mission and ask if anyone was able to guess whether or not they knew the images were from the moon.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/CATEGORIES

These discussion questions can be either held as a whole group class discussion, can be responded to as individual writing prompts, or can be addressed in pairs. As the teacher, you decide what will work/not work with the time constraints and your class’ interest in the topic.

### GENERAL/OPEN PROMPTS

1. What other things could be shown to people that would evoke the same reaction as the moon? What would you show someone who has lived in a city all of their lives? What would you show someone who has lived in a rural area all of their lives? Would you be able to evoke the same feeling of wonder?

### EXPLORING SELF

1. In his interview, Wylie Overstreet said that he made this short film to unite people: “I wanted this to be a reminder that that is exactly what we are: ‘Human’ is the only label that matters, now and forever. Our future depends upon realizing this.” Do you think he was successful in achieving this objective in his film? Why or why not?

### EXPLORING WORLD

1. Would you get the same reaction from groups of people around the world? How would your reaction to looking at the moon differ from someone’s reaction from across the world?

### EXPLORING FILMMAKING

1. Why do you think Wylie Overstreet chose to make a film about this?
2. If you could make a film similar to Wylie’s, what would you film people looking at? Puppies playing? The ocean? Snow falling? What would you choose and why?

### EXPLORING SOCIAL ISSUES

1. Do you think it is important for everyone to look at the moon? Why?

### SENSE OF WONDER

1. Can you think of a time that you were able to look through a telescope? What did you feel? How could you describe that feeling to someone who is blind?



## ACTIVITY

Create an advertisement that will inspire people to “just look up” to promote NASA’s “International Observe the Moon Night” on October 20.



### TIME NEEDED:

Approximately 45 minutes (5-minute instructions, 5-minute planning, 10-15 poster/video/song completion, 10-minute presentation). As a teacher, you know your classroom best, please modify this activity to meet your students’ needs!

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

Different sizes of paper, markers/pencils/colored pencils

### DIRECTIONS:

NASA has declared October 20, 2018 as “International Observe the Moon Night.” In his interview, Wylie Overstreet states that if people took one action after seeing *A New View of the Moon*, it is that people “go outside and look up.” NASA’s objective in creating “International Observe the Moon Night” on October 20th, is the same as Wylie’s. They just want people to look up.

Your students will be responsible for creating a poster that incentivizes people to do just that, look up, while promoting NASA’s “International Observe the Moon Night.”

1. Split students into small groups (recommended 2-3) and have them work together to design a poster, song, or short video to promote “International Observe the Moon Night.”
2. You will decide how much time to give to students (recommended 10-15 minutes).
3. When students are done, they can display their work around the school to promote the same mission as NASA and Wylie Overstreet, to “just look up.”

## Take it a step further. Host an event on October 20.

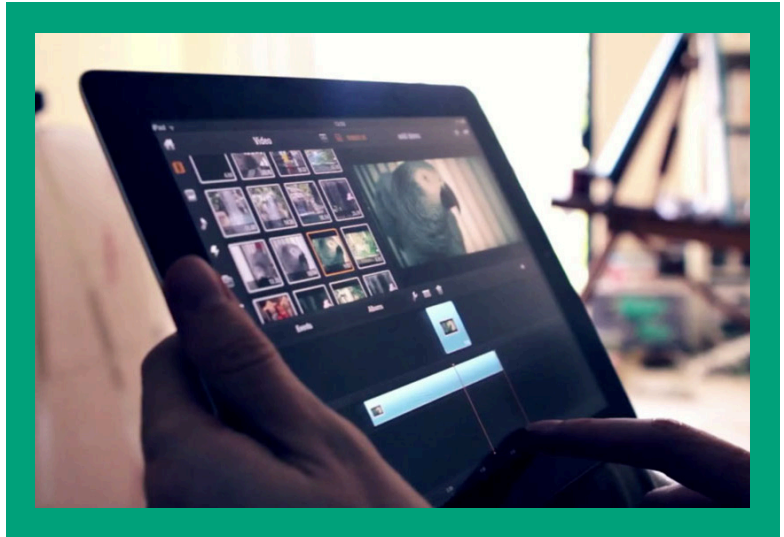
Your class can use their posters to advertise this event on October 20 (or any date!) to honor the idea that everyone needs to look up. You could:

- Build a telescope as a class (look to recommended extensions for NASA’s lesson covering this).
- Rent a telescope locally by contacting a local university or science outreach program, or [Worldwidetelescope.org](http://Worldwidetelescope.org) has several pre-loaded images from telescopes to stimulate a telescope. Visit [worldwidetelescope.org](http://worldwidetelescope.org) and click on ‘Explore’ in the upper left-hand corner.
- If you host an event, let us know! Email us at [education@mountainfilm.org](mailto:education@mountainfilm.org) or tag us on Instagram or Facebook at [@mountainfilm](https://www.instagram.com/mountainfilm).



## ACTIVITY

# Create and edit a short film answering the questions: What does it mean to be a human? What unites us as humans?



### TIME NEEDED:

Approximately 120 minutes (10-minute instructions, 15-minute planning, 30-45 minute video completion, 30-minute editing, 10-15 minute presentation/discussion). As a teacher, you know your classroom best, please modify this activity to meet your students' needs!

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

Pencil, paper, computer, smart phone or iPad

### DIRECTIONS:

In his interview, Wylie Overstreet states that he made this film for the “specific audience of humankind.” In making, *A New View of the Moon*, Wylie wanted to remind people that they are “human,” and that “it is the only label that matters, now and forever. All others are illusions. Our future depends upon realizing this.” When asked the question: “What is one piece of advice you can give students that you wish someone had shared with you?” Wylie responded “don’t be intimidated,” and encourages all students to not be scared to start making films.

For this activity, you are going to ask students to be the filmmaker. Since everyone has a phone, they can use that as their tool. Phones make it easy for everyone to be a filmmaker these days, from the shooting of the images to editing. Or, if your school doesn’t allow phones, have them use iPads or another tool. Chances are, your students will know how to do this.

The goal of this part of the lesson is to help students understand that you don’t need a lot of tools to be a filmmaker, they already have them! Through this part of the lesson, students will be answering the questions:

**What does it mean to be a human?  
What unites us as humans?**

1. Have your students work in small groups (3 people recommended).
2. Give them time to brainstorm the answers to the questions, plan what they are going to film, film and edit.
  - If having your students make a short film in response to these questions feels like too much, then you can modify the activity to have the students discuss the questions as a group.
3. Have a movie day! Let students share and discuss their completed films.



## EXIT TICKET

### RECOMMENDED EXTENSIONS:

1. **The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter Camera.** Their website has a plethora of lessons to choose from regarding the moon. Here is the link to their teaching resources: <http://lroc.sese.asu.edu/educators/history>
2. **Build a Telescope!** NASA has created an easy step-by-step lesson to help build a telescope. You will need two convex lenses. You can order convex lenses either through School Specialty or Amazon, and they are relatively cheap (\$1.49 a piece at School Specialty or \$11.50 for a pack of six on Amazon). Instructions and lesson: [https://www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/informal/features/F\\_Build\\_a\\_Telescope.html](https://www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/informal/features/F_Build_a_Telescope.html)
3. **Cosmoquest Lessons.** Cosmoquest was founded by NASA to involve citizens in “citizen science,” which engages people “in meaningful ways that advance our understanding of the universe”. Find lessons on their educator page: <https://cosmoquest.org/x/educatorszone/curricula-and-lesson-plans/>.

Their lesson “Why the Moon?” would be the most applicable to the short film, *A New View of the Moon*: <http://bit.ly/whythemoonlesson>.

It does ask students to compare and contrast 5 images of the moon’s surface and the earth’s surface, so you would need to prep these images, but this would be a great way to deepen understanding of the film *A New View of the Moon*, while supporting Wylie’s mission to bring people together.

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