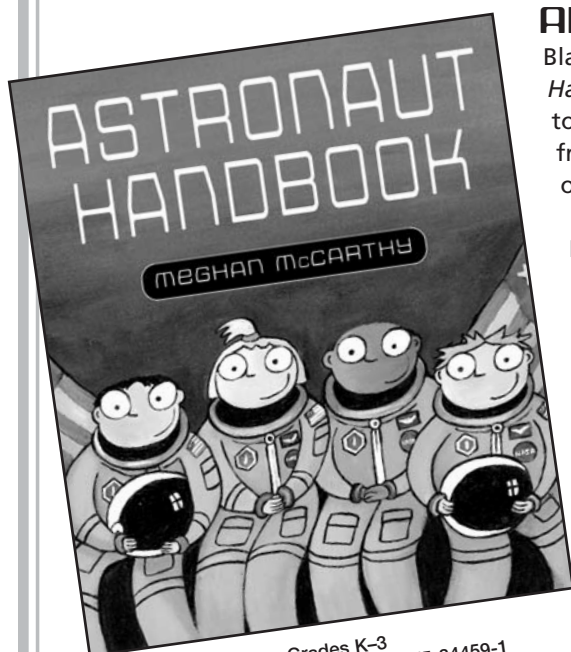
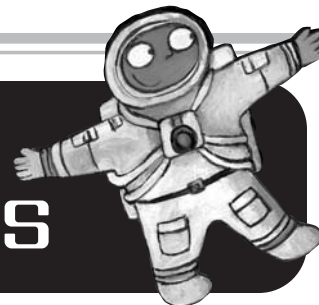


OUT-OF-THIS-WORLD CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES



Grades K-3
Alfred A. Knopf HC: 978-0-375-84459-1
GLB: 978-0-375-94459-8

ABOUT THE BOOK

Blast off to astronaut school with Meghan McCarthy and the *Astronaut Handbook*. Take a ride on the "Vomit Comet" and learn how it feels to be weightless. Try a bite of astronaut food, such as delicious freeze-dried ice cream. Have your measurements taken—one hundred of your hand alone—for your very own space suit.

Featuring McCarthy's trademark humor, *Astronaut Handbook* contains fun facts about what it takes to become an astronaut. Includes an author's note with additional resources

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Meghan McCarthy is the critically acclaimed author-illustrator of *The Adventures of Patty and the Big Red Bus*, *Aliens Are Coming!*, and *Strong Man*. For more information, visit her Web site at www.meghan-mccarthy.com.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Ask students: What is a handbook? Have you ever used a handbook for a sport, club, or activity? What kinds of things did it help you do? What could you write a handbook for?

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

- Who can become an astronaut? Would you like to become one?
Which type of astronaut would you most like to be? Why?
- What does "take a lot of preparation" mean? What other types of jobs take a lot of preparation?
- Why do you think a fitness test is so important for aspiring astronauts?
What types of exercise do you like to do?
- Are you a good team player? How do you improve on this important skill?
- Why is survival training so important for an astronaut?
- If someone offered to take you up on the Vomit Comet today, would you go?
Why or why not? What would be the best part of being weightless?
- Did you notice the astronaut's utensils for meals? Why are scissors important? Which food would you most like to try?
- What's the most interesting fact you learned in the book?
Where can you learn more?
- Why is it best to like small spaces if you want to be an astronaut?
Do you like them or not? Why?
- Which illustration is your favorite? Why?



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CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

LANGUAGE ARTS—Lead a class discussion about career choices and then have students interview someone who has a career they might be interested in learning more about. They should write at least three questions that they think are most important to know. After the interview, have them send a thank-you note for sharing their time.

SCIENCE—Have students design a gadget or tool that they think an astronaut would find handy in space. It could help them do their job or just do simple tasks like writing, reading, cooking, or playing a game. What things do you need to consider that are important in your design?

HISTORY—Send students to the NASA Web site at www.nasa.gov to discover great games and resources. Have them create a time line of human space flight with at least five important events included, or have them create a poster about one of the missions and share it with the class.

ART—Share images from space on the NASA Web site and in books. Then, inspired by what they see, have students create their own piece of art celebrating the universe. It can be a painting, sculpture, collage, or line drawing. Lastly, have them write a brief paragraph that explains what inspired their piece.

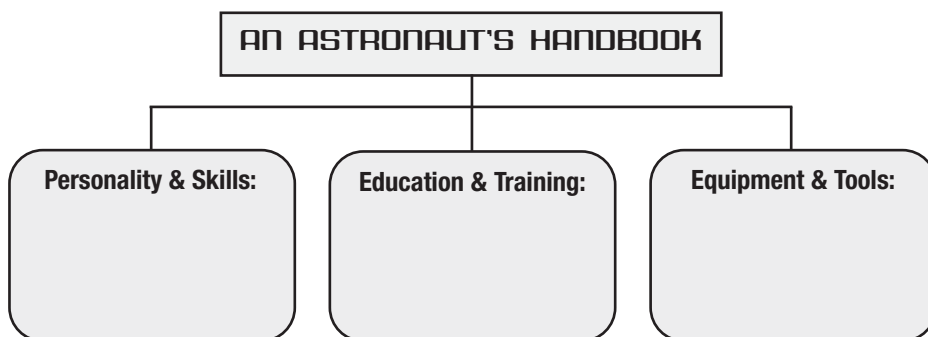
VOCABULARY—Distribute a chart based on words from the book to the class for them to fill out. For the first two columns, students should check which description is more accurate for them. In the last column, they should try to use the word in a sentence.

SAMPLE CHART

Words	This word is new for me	I've heard this word used before	I can use this word in a sentence
<i>Repair</i>			
<i>Satellites</i>			
<i>Preparation</i>			
<i>Fitness</i>			
<i>Measurements</i>			

READING—As students read *Astronaut Handbook* have them fill out the following graphic organizer. Afterwards, lead a class discussion about which parts of being an astronaut sound exciting and which parts sound challenging.

SAMPLE ORGANIZER



Illustrations © 2008 by Meghan McCarthy.

NAME _____

Directions: *Astronaut Handbook* is a how-to book, or instructional piece of writing. Brainstorm ideas that you might use to write a handbook of your own like playing a sport or creating a craft. Use this graphic organizer to help with your ideas:



_____ HANDBOOK

First:

Then:

Next:

After that:

Finally:

EDUCATORS: Reproduce this activity sheet to use with students.

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