

# **METEOR SHOWERS**

## ***The Little Star***

*Out of a billion stars  
here am I just this one,  
Turning up my distant face  
Like any other sun.  
Quietly giving light  
Is all the joy I know,  
Sharing all my own delight  
With everyone I know.*

*By Ida Bohatta (Shooting Stars, book for children)*

Have you ever observed a late night sky in August , October or December sky? It is a perfect opportunity to watch a meteor shower! Meteor showers don't happen every night. If you really want to see a show, you have to find out when they are occurring. There are a number of websites and resources that can give dates and appropriate times to watch them. Meteor showers typically occur in the midnight and wee, early morning hours of the day. Depending on where you live, the more you will see. If you live in an area of low artificial light, you will see the most meteors. If you live where there is a lot of artificial light at night, you may want to try to get to a place where the stars are more visible.

## Interesting Meteor Shower Facts

- In the Northern Hemisphere, the most popular meteor shower is in early August. The shower called the Perseid meteor shower. It is most popular during this time because its during summer break for most people and during clear summer night skies.
- Popular meteor showers also occur in January, December and October.
- Halley 's Comet is popular during meteor shower occurrences, but is only visible once every 75 years. You may be lucky enough to see it once in a

lifetime. The last time Halley's comet passed through our atmosphere was 1986 and is expected to pass through again in 2061! How old will you be during the next time its visible!?

- You don't have to have special equipment to watch a meteor shower. As long as the skies are dark & clear, you can watch.
- Meteors happen within the thermosphere of our atmosphere. They are only about 75 miles in the air.
- While meteors are generally small, they can travel upwards of 160,000 miles per hour!
- There have been records of intense showers which are also called meteor storms. Meteor storms are different from meteor showers. Showers have a rate of about 100 meteors in an hour. Meteor storms can have had up to 1,000 meteors in an hour!
- Can you think of another name for a meteor shower?