

**“Live... from McDonald Observatory!”
Videoconference
“Observing Venus: Explore how it changes”
Student activity sheet**



McDonald Observatory

Name: _____ Date: _____

In the year 1610, an astronomer named Galileo Galilei explored Venus with his telescope. No one had ever used a telescope to see Venus before him. While exploring Venus, Galileo made a great discovery about our solar system. Today, you will explore planet Venus and make that discovery for yourself.

Section 1: Our science journal: make your own sketch of planet Venus

Remember, every good astronomer makes careful investigations. Look closely at the image on your screen, and draw what you see from the telescope.

Look at your drawing. Did you discover anything interesting about planet Venus? Write down your answer here.

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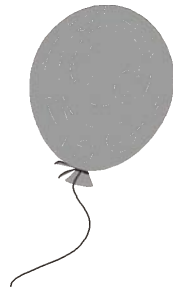
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Section 2: Watching Venus change.

Did you notice that the size of Venus changes in Galileo’s drawings?

Let’s think about the how the size of a balloon changes....



If it is close to you...



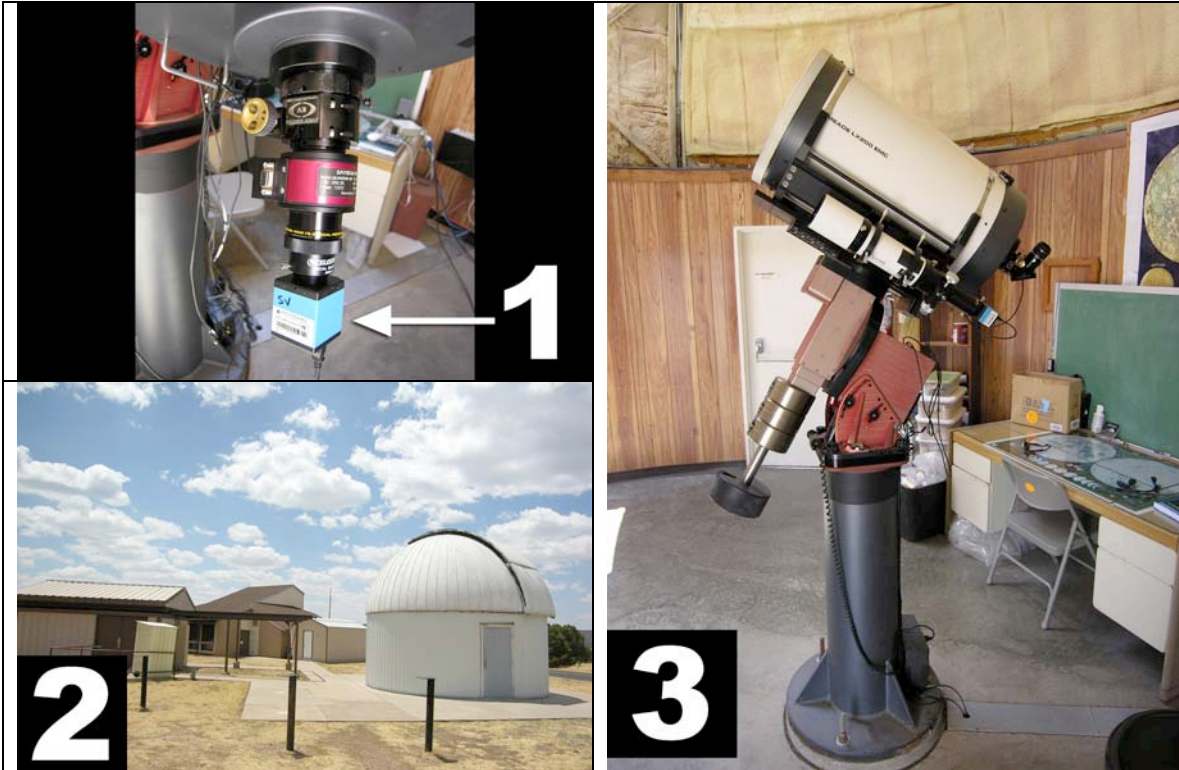
If it is far from you...

Why is the size of Venus always changing? Write your answer here.

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- 1: The digital videocamera takes electronic images of Venus.
2: The dome protects and houses the telescope and equipment.
3: Inside the dome is this 16-inch (40.6 cm) telescope that you will use during the videoconference.

Equipment and hardware used in Venus observations:

Telescope: *One 80-mm (3-inch) Explore Scientific refractor.
One Meade 40.6 cm (16-inch) reflector*

Cameras: *Two Imaging Source high-resolution grayscale cameras*

Mounting: *Software Bisque ME Robotic Paramount
(Telescopes and cameras are remote operated
from videoconference studio)*

Computer: *Apple Mac-mini (Intel)*