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THE PLEIADES

Amy Lowell

By day you cannot see the sky
For it is up so very high.
You look and look, but it's so blue
That you can never see right through.

But when night comes it is quite plain,
And all the stars are there again.
They seem just like old friends to me,
I've known them all my life you see.

There is the dipper first, and there
Is Cassiopeia in her chair,
Orion's Belt, the Milky Way,
And lots I know but cannot say.

One group looks like a swarm of bees,
Papa says they're the Pleiades;
But I think they must be the toy
Of some nice little angel boy.

Perhaps his jackstones which today
He has forgot to put away,
And left them lying on the sky
Where he will find them by and by.

I wish he'd come and play with me.
We'd have such fun, for it would be
A most unusual thing for boys
To feel that they had stars for toys!



VOCABULARY:

Cassiopeia	a constellation named for Queen Cassiopeia from Greek mythology
Orion's Belt	the three brightest stars in the constellation Orion
Milky Way	the galaxy containing our solar system
Pleiades	a group of stars that are part of the constellation Taurus
jackstones	metal pieces used in playing the game of jacks

ANALYZE:

1. Think about the rhyming structure of this poem. Label each line and then write out the rhyme scheme.
the first two lines and the last two lines of each stanza rhyme; two rhyming couplets per stanza
2. Who is the speaker of the poem? The speaker is a boy (line 23).

1	By day you cannot see the sky	<u>A</u>	13	One group looks like a swarm of bees,	<u>A</u>
2	For it is up so very high.	<u>A</u>	14	Papa says they're the Pleiades;	<u>A</u>
3	You look and look, but it's so blue	<u>B</u>	15	But I think they must be the toy	<u>B</u>
4	That you can never see right through.	<u>B</u>	16	Of some nice little angel boy.	<u>B</u>
5	But when night comes it is quite plain,	<u>A</u>	17	Perhaps his jackstones which today	<u>A</u>
6	And all the stars are there again.	<u>A</u>	18	He has forgot to put away,	<u>A</u>
7	They seem just like old friends to me,	<u>B</u>	19	And left them lying on the sky	<u>B</u>
8	I've known them all my life you see.	<u>B</u>	20	Where he will find them by and by.	<u>B</u>
9	There is the dipper first, and there	<u>A</u>	21	I wish he'd come and play with me.	<u>A</u>
10	Is Cassiopeia in her chair,	<u>A</u>	22	We'd have such fun, for it would be	<u>A</u>
11	Orion's Belt, the Milky Way,	<u>B</u>	23	A most unusual thing for boys	<u>B</u>
12	And lots I know but cannot say.	<u>B</u>	24	To feel that they had stars for toys!	<u>B</u>

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS:

1. How are stars like old friends? They are always around; the boy is very familiar with them after having known them all his life.

2. What is "the dipper"? one of two constellations: the big dipper or the little dipper

3. Discuss each constellation mentioned. The constellation Cassiopeia represents a queen from Greek mythology whose arrogance and vanity led to her being chained to the sky in a chair by the sea god Poseidon. Orion is one of the most recognizable constellations in the sky; he was a great hunter in Greek mythology. The Pleiades were known as The Seven Sisters, the daughters of the Titan Atlas. The Pleiades were often used as a navigational tool by sailors in ancient times.

4. What is the imagery used to describe the Pleiades? a "swarm of bees"; an angel boy's jackstones left scattered across the sky

5. What story does the author create to explain the stars? A boy imagines the stars are the toys of an angel child, jackstones which the angel forgot to put away and left scattered across the sky.
