

The solar eclipse will begin on Monday, April 8, 2024 at approximately 1:40pm for Greater Houston, when the Moon starts to block out the southwest side of the Sun (at the 5 o'clock mark). The Moon will continue to block out more of the Sun until totality, when the Sun is fully blocked by the Moon.

Greater Houston will not experience a full eclipse, but it will still be substantial. This will be the last total solar eclipse visible from the contiguous United States until 2044! We'll all be grownups by then! Click [HERE](#) for the NASA map.

Although our Collab Kids may not grasp the magnitude of this event, it's still a great opportunity for us to use the moment for some fun STEAM activities!

Here are a few suggests:

Sun, Moon, and Earth Model-Create a simple model to illustrate the relationship between the Sun, Moon, and Earth. Use a flashlight to represent the Sun and allow children to manipulate cut-out shapes of the Moon and Earth to understand the concept of an eclipse.

Shadow Play-Set up a shadow play station using a flashlight and various objects. Encourage children to explore how shadows change in size and shape, mimicking the effect of the Moon blocking the Sun during an eclipse.

Vocabulary Play-Use the picture cards to match the science vocabulary words. "Sun," "Moon," "Earth," "Eclipse," "Sky," etc. Have the children identify these words and images and match them to what they would see during the event.

Also, here's what NOT to do during a solar eclipse:

Looking at the intense light from the Sun, even for just a few seconds, can cause permanent damage to the retina (part of the eye directly responsible for vision). Exposing your eyes to the Sun without proper eye protection during a solar eclipse can cause retinal burns (solar retinopathy). The only safe way to look directly at the Sun during an eclipse is through special-purpose solar filters, like eclipse glasses or handheld solar viewers. Also, the only safe time to glance at the Sun without solar filters is during the 2-4 minutes of total eclipse.

Click [HERE](#) for to learn more.

As we anticipate the awe-inspiring total solar eclipse on April 8, 2024, let's seize the moment to infuse excitement into our Collab Kids' STEAM learning journey. While they might not fully grasp the celestial mechanics, the engaging STEAM activities we've curated (and your additional ideas) promise to make this event unforgettable.

But remember, safety is paramount. Keep our Collab Kids' eyes protected as we explore the universe's wonders together!