Why Do Stars Twinkle?

The star holds still; the air makes it wink



Goodnight, Winking Stars

Rosa says goodnight to the sky, and the stars wink and shiver and sparkle back. But wait — are they really blinking on and off, like tiny fairy lights?





A Lantern Across the Valley

First secret: the star itself is NOT blinking. A star shines steady, like a lantern glowing far across a valley, sending one thin, steady beam all the way to your eye.

> **TALK ABOUT IT**
> The star itself flashes on and off.

The Ocean of Wiggling Air

But we live at the bottom of a deep ocean of air — and it's always wiggling! Warm puffs rise, cool puffs sink. You've seen it: that shimmery wavy air over a hot summer road is air on the move.

TALK ABOUT IT
Find the wiggling air.





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The Coin Game

Bath-time game! A coin rests at the bottom of the tub. When the water is still, the coin looks still. What happens to the coin when you gently swish the water?

TALK ABOUT IT

When the water swishes, what will the coin seem to do?

The Light Dances — the Coin Stays

The coin seems to wobble and dance — but it never moved! Swishing water bends the light on its way to your eye. Wiggly air does the same to starlight: nudge, nudge — wink, wink. The star holds still; the air makes it wink! Wow: astronauts above the air see stars burn perfectly steady.





Wink Back

Tonight, find your favorite star and wink at it — you know its secret now. The star holds still; the air makes it wink. And at bath time, let the coin show you how light dances.

Check your wonder

1 **Is the star really flashing on and off?**

- **A.** No — wiggly air bends its steady light
- **B.** Yes, like fairy lights

2 **What did the coin do when the water swished?**

- **A.** Seemed to dance — but never moved
- **B.** Slid around the bottom of the tub

3 **Who sees stars that never twinkle?**

- **A.** Astronauts, floating above the air
- **B.** People at the top of a hill

ANSWERS 1-A 2-A 3-A

1. Right — the star holds still; the air makes it wink! 2. Yes! The light danced; the coin stayed. 3. Above the wiggly air, starlight arrives perfectly steady.

THE END

The star holds still; the air makes it wink

Put your child in this story

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