Grades Middle School and Up
Go, Go, Go Around New York

Star Navigation

Through an exploration of constellations and star navigation, you will gain knowledge of how different people from various parts of the world saw distinct objects in the sky. Inspired by the variety of myths and tales for different constellations, you will create a constellation to tell your own story.

What Will You Learn?

- Constellation formation
- Myths and legends behind a few constellations

Materials:

- Large black card
- Glow stars
- Glue dot sheets
- String floss

Instructions:

1. Lay the black paper horizontally on the table.
2. Use a pencil to briefly sketch out the star placement and constellation path.
3. Place the stars in the shape of the constellation on the black paper to see how it appears, adjust as needed.
4. Use the glue dots to stick stars into their respective places.
5. Take the string and connect the stars by looping the string under the edges of the various stars and pull tight.

**Reflection Questions:**
- Which constellation interests you the most?
- Do you have a place you can go in your neighborhood to star gaze?
- Do any constellations connect to each other or have similar stories?
- Which constellations are on the ceiling of Grand Central?

**Explanation:**
- Constellations are groupings of stars that form patterns in the night sky.
- Constellations were named hundreds of years ago and are often named after people, animals, or objects from long ago.
- The constellations you see at night completely depend on the time of the year and where on Earth you are.
- They were of extreme importance to navigation before we invented maps and GPS. Astronomers today still use constellations to name stars and meteor showers.
- Constellations with popular stories:
  - Orion & Scorpius
  - Ursa Major and Ursa Minor (Big Dipper & Little Dipper)
  - Leo: Represents one of Hercules’ 12 Labors of slaying the Nemean Lion
Further Reading Recommendations:

Seeing Stars

Where Are the Constellations?

Sky Gazing

Borrow these books and more: borrow.nypl.org