

NIGHT SKY PROJECTIONS



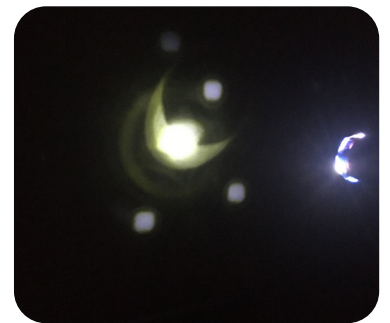
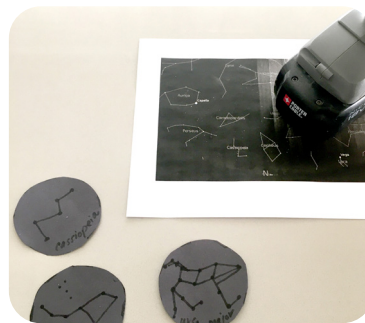
For centuries, sailors and explorers used the stars for navigation. They would identify specific stars and the shapes they made, which are called constellations. Today, astronomers use these same stars to map our place in the galaxy and beyond.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Flashlight(s)
- Pencil (or Marker)
- Notecards
- Pin
- Clear Tape

WHAT YOU'LL DO:

1. With the help of a parent or other grownup, **find pictures online of as many constellations as you can.** Examples include Orion, Cassiopeia and Ursa Major (also known as the Great Bear or the Big Dipper).
2. On a notecard, **trace the lens end of the flashlight.** Do this for each constellation you found. (*Tip: If you don't have notecards, you can use any thick paper. Just make sure it's thick enough to block light from the flashlight.*)
3. **Trace or draw a constellation** inside each of the shapes you just made, making one constellation per shape.
4. With the help of a grownup, use a pin or the tip of a sharpened pencil to **poke small holes in each notecard** at every point where a star would be.



5. **Tape one of the notecards over the end of the flashlight** while it's off. Make sure that the side you drew on is facing toward the flashlight bulb with the other side facing outwards. If you have multiple flashlights, feel free to tape a different constellation to each one.
6. **Find a dark room** with a wide ceiling or uncovered wall. (*Tip: If you are having trouble finding an uncovered wall, ask a grownup to help you hang up a plain, solid-color bedsheet on one of the walls.*)
7. **Turn on the flashlight** and see if you can identify which constellation is projected on the wall or ceiling. Using your imagination, can you connect the stars to draw the shape of the constellation? (*Caution: A flashlight bulb can get warm!*)

Try answering the following questions about each constellation.

- What time of year can you see this constellation?
- In which hemisphere is this constellation visible?
- Why can we only see certain constellations at certain times of the year?
- Why do constellations appear to move across the sky?

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