

Constellation Creation

Background Information:

Science:

A constellation is an imaginary pattern of stars in the sky. Some of the most common constellations are Ursa Major, Orion, Cassiopeia, Scorpius, and Cygnus.

Language Arts:

A myth is a story that tries to explain something or a belief. It usually deals with a hero or a heroine.

Connections:

Oftentimes constellations have myths that go with them. A constellation myth tries to explain why that particular constellation is in the sky. For example, "Cancer was the crab sent to harass Hercules while he was on his second labor. As he battled the Lernaean Hydra, the ever-jealous Juno sent Cancer to nip at the hero's heels. The crab was eventually crushed beneath Hercules's feet, but Juno placed it in the heavens as a reward for its faithful service."

(<http://www.comfychair.org/~cmbell/myth/cancer.html>)

Your Task:

You will create a constellation and write a myth to go with that constellation.

Supplies:

"What does your name look like as a constellation?", overhead transparency & markers/sharpie

Procedures:

On "What does your name look like as a constellation?":

1. Create your name constellation. Remember, constellations are pictures made by stars in the sky. However, the pictures are NOT completely outlined by stars! You need to use your imagination!

*Follow the directions on the sheet to create your name constellation. You MUST use two names: first and last or first and middle depending on your choice and the lengths of your names!

*Be sure to include some larger, brighter stars and some smaller, dimmer stars in your constellation. (HINT: maybe make the first letter bigger and brighter or the vowels bigger, etc. Think back to the powerpoint of differences in star sizes, colors, brightness, etc.)

On lined paper :

2. Write a myth about your constellation. Include the following things in your myth:

Paragraph 1: Introduction:

- o A summary about stars: what are they? How do they differ? What similarities do they have? Etc.
- o A description of what a constellation is and who first discovered/named them
- o A statement of how constellations make it easy to locate stars and positions in the sky

Paragraph 2: The Constellation:

- o Name of constellation
- o Nickname of constellation
- o How many stars make up your constellation
- o The best season to see it and the best month to see it

Paragraph 3: The Myth:

- o Where the myth occurred (country, city, or state)
- o Main character(s)
- o How the constellation got into the sky
- o What does it mean to us today (i.e. the moral of the story)?

On the Transparency:

Overlay the transparency onto your constellation. Copy the stars onto the transparency in one color marker and sketch the outline in a separate color.