ORLANDO SCIENCE CENTER

Astronomy Family Night: Family Take Home Activity

Constellation Creation

Objective: You will be able to make your own constellation!

Materials: Non-clear paper or plastic cup, marker, thumbtack, flashlight

FCAT Vocab: *Constellation* - a pattern formed by stars that are close to one another.

Procedure

1. Find a paper or plastic cup and put it upside down on a flat surface.
2. Use a marker to mark dots as the points in your constellation. Get creative! Make the first letter of your name or a design, like a heart.
3. CAREFULLY take a thumbtack (adult may have to do this part or supervise) and poke a hole into each of the marker dots.
4. Take a flashlight and shine it into the cup. This will work best in a dark room with the cup close to a wall or table.
5. Explore how your constellation changes as you move the cup and flashlight closer and farther.

Discussion

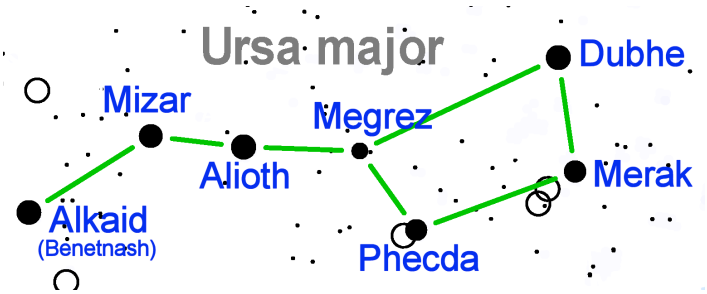
What is a constellation?

A constellation is a pattern formed by stars that are close to one another. In ancient times, constellations were linked to a mythical event, creature or person and used to navigate. Now, the celestial sphere is divided into 88 official constellations.

What is a famous constellation?

One of the most famous constellations is the Big Dipper or Ursa Major.

Take your star finder that you made at Astronomy Night. Can you find any constellations?



Web Resources

- http://www.google.com/sky/
- http://www.kidsastronomy.com/