

Create a Constellation

Are you looking for an enjoyable activity to do in the evening with your child? Does taking a nighttime stroll and gazing at stars sound inviting? Help your child learn about constellations by making one of his own. All you need are a few simple, inexpensive materials.

What You Need:

- Black or dark blue construction paper
- Small gold sticker stars
- White chalk
- Star map (optional)

What to Do:

1. Take several evening walks with your child and look at the night sky together. Explain that a constellation is a group of stars that form a pattern in the sky. Bring along a star map to make searching for certain constellations a bit easier.
2. Talk about why some constellations are only visible from certain parts of the Earth, while others can only be seen during certain times of the year (seasonally).
3. Help him understand that the patterns of stars don't change, even though they appear to move across the night sky. The stars seem to move because the Earth is rotating.
4. Now create your own constellation. Take a sheet of black or dark blue construction paper and set it on a table in front of your child.
5. Invite him to take a gold star sticker and raise his hand about 18 inches above the construction paper.
6. Now have him drop it down onto the paper. If it lands gold side up, gently press it down to make sure it sticks. If it lands sticky side up, flip it over and press it down on the paper.
7. Repeat steps 5 and 6 until there are five to ten stars on the paper. Make sure he drops them so they land in a random pattern.
8. Create the constellation's outline by helping him connect the stars with white chalk, just like connecting the dots. Encourage him to use curved or wavy lines to create his image.
9. Give the constellation a name. Brainstorm ideas together, then have him write the name he chooses on the paper above the constellation.

