

Constellation Quest



Your Challenge:

A few constellations have such easily identified shapes that you can see them - even with city lights and smog. Your challenge is to find them in the "Sky Tonight" windows and then outside on the next clear night.

Discovering:

Run the Sky Tonight program from Space Update and then:

1. Look for each of these patterns at 8PM and at 5AM, if you cannot find it at 8PM. Orion, Ursa Major (Big Dipper), Scorpius, Leo, Cygnus, Cassiopeia
List the patterns that you found:

2. Make a drawing of each constellation on a different index card. In your drawing show the direction to face, the time to observe and how the constellation will look. Label your drawing with the constellation's name.
3. Take your cards outside and see if you can find the constellations.

Making Science Sense:

Look for the ancient shapes in the constellation patterns. Orion was a hunter; Scorpius, a scorpion; Cygnus, a swan; Leo, a lion; Cassiopeia, a Queen in a chair; and Ursa Major was a Big Bear. The Big Bear contains the Big Dipper, which may be an easier pattern to identify. For one of the constellations you have drawn, sketch the outline of what the constellation represents.

