

EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

Star Stories

Preparation

Overview and Objectives

This lesson is geared toward families interested in exploring constellations together.

During its time of service, Intrepid was involved in the Space Race as a recovery vessel for two early space missions as the United States moved towards sending astronauts to the Moon. The names of these early space missions came from objects in space inspired by mythology.

Participants will understand that people long ago created stories inspired by constellations and determine how a constellation story inspired the name of an early space mission.

This lesson includes a [slideshow](#) in which an instructor can lead participants through an investigation of the origin of the names of these early space missions. The lesson culminates with participants creating their very own constellation and constellation story,

Instructional Modalities

This activity was designed for both synchronous or asynchronous instruction.

For **synchronous instruction**, we recommend a platform that allows both for whole class discussion and for participants to interact in small groups.

For **asynchronous adaptations**, we provide suggestions for teachers to provide additional support for the activities and for participants to share their work with each other.

Materials

- [Star Stories Slideshow](#)
- [Visual Instructions](#)
- One cardboard tube
- Toothpick
- Dark construction paper circle
- Gluestick

Discussion

Questions

What shapes can we imagine in the night sky?

What stories can we tell about those shapes?

- **Constellation Viewer Visual Instructions**

Lesson

1. Introductory Activity

- Ask Participants:
 - **What do you know about spacecraft?**
 - **What are some tasks astronauts do on their missions?**
 - Discuss the responses with the group.

2. Core Activity

- Share [video](#) of a museum educator discussing the Gemini Space capsule and discuss constellations and how the Gemini Constellation got its name..
 - **Why would the Gemini mission be named after a constellation of twins?**
 - **What is a constellation?**
- Discuss constellations. Constellations are names given to groups of stars that create recognizable shapes or pictures. Cultures all over the world looked into the night sky and created stories with constellations as characters.
- Share [video](#) of a museum educator discussing different constellation stories. When the educator in the video asks questions, the facilitator can pause the video to collect participant responses.
- Guide participants in creating their own constellations by creating a constellation viewer using the [visual instructions](#).
 - **What does your constellation look like to you? Does it look like an object, person, or animal?**
 - **What is a story you could tell about this object, person, or animal?**

Asynchronous Adaptation

Have participants go through the [slideshow](#) on their own. Using their [visual instructions](#), participants can create their own constellation viewer. Have participants share their constellation stories using flipgrid using Padlet or Google Doc.

Extension Activities

To deepen participant engagement with this content, you may choose to add the following activities :

Connect Constellation Stories

Have participants share their stories with each other and work together to create a constellation story that features more than one constellation

Connect a Constellation Story to Seasonal Change

Many cultures used constellations to explain the seasons they were experiencing on Earth. Create a story for your constellation explaining why we might experience the qualities of your favorite season. Example: A story why it might be cold in winter or rain often in the spring.

Additional Resources/ References

More information on Intrepid's connection to early space travel:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vYmYbJqVRqQ>

Information on Project Mercury:

<https://youtu.be/XAufxg23nn8>

The Museum is deeply grateful to the funders that make our education programs possible:



*This project was made possible in part by the
Institute of Museum and Library Services, Award ID:
CAGML-247144-OMLS-20*

ACTIVITY 1: MAKE A CONSTELLATION VIEWER

1. To make your own constellation viewer, you will need one tube, a toothpick, a construction paper circle, a constellation template, and glue. If you want to cut your own circle, you can trace a circle on the paper with a pencil using your tube.



2. Then, cut out your circle using scissors. You can also use a pre-cut circle if you would prefer.



3. Next, you will need to glue your circle onto one end of your tube. Apply glue to the rim of the tube, then press the circle down.



4. While you are waiting for the glue to dry, you can decorate your viewer with markers and stickers.



5. To make your constellation, you can either use a template or make your own. Stick the toothpick through your paper circle where you would like your stars to be.



6. Your viewer is ready! Look through the other end to see your constellation.

