



CLEVELAND MUSEUM
OF NATURAL HISTORY
100 YEARS OF DISCOVERY

SKY LEGENDS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

**BONUS RESOURCE
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8
2:00 P.M.**

Watch on the Hudson Library
Facebook page anytime before 10/18

Plan a visit to the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.
Advanced Ticket Purchase is Required.

MUSEUM HOURS
Tuesday–Sunday: 10am–5pm, (Closed Monday)
For more details visit:

<https://www.cmnh.org/visit>



HUDSON LIBRARY
& HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Sky Legends of the Ancient World

Vocabulary Guide

- **Asterism** - a star pattern composed of obvious close groupings of stars, or extremely bright patterns of stars. (e.g. The Big Dipper, Seven Sisters, Belt of Orion, Summer Triangle)
- **Chinese Star Legends** - the following concepts/characters will be presented - Chinese New Year, the star Ta Kio (Arcturus), Chih Nu (the Goddess of Weaving)
- **Circumpolar Stars** - stars that never set from a given location but rather continuously circle about the celestial pole.
- **Constellation** - a group of stars that form a pattern. Constellations are named after their shapes or often after figures from mythology.
- **Egyptian Star Legends**- the following concepts/characters will be presented - Imperishable Stars (Big Dipper), pyramids, Osiris, Isis, Nut.
- **Greco-Roman Star Legends** - the following characters will be presented - Andromeda, Perseus, Cassiopeia, Cetus, Perseus, Cepheus, Ursa Major/Minor, Medusa, Pegasus, Orion, Taurus.
- **Indian (Hindu) Star Legends** - the following concepts/characters will be presented – Mount Meru, Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva, the Seven Rishis, Rohini (Aldebaran)
- **Milky Way** - our home galaxy, made of hundreds of billions of stars and vast clouds of gas and dust. All of the individual stars seen on a clear night are nearby neighbors of the Sun in the Milky Way galaxy. The Milky Way is also the name given to the hazy band of light made up of countless faint stars visible to the unaided eye stretching across a dark sky. It is our disk-shaped galaxy seen edge-on from the inside.
- **Myth** - a traditional story, especially one about the early history of a people or one that explains some natural phenomenon. Myths typically involve supernatural beings or events.
- **North Star** - also called Polaris (the "Pole Star"), the only star that doesn't appear to move in the nighttime sky. The axis of the Earth extended above the North Pole points towards Polaris.
- **Zodiac** – the band of constellations through which the Sun, Moon and planets appear to travel.

Extension Activities

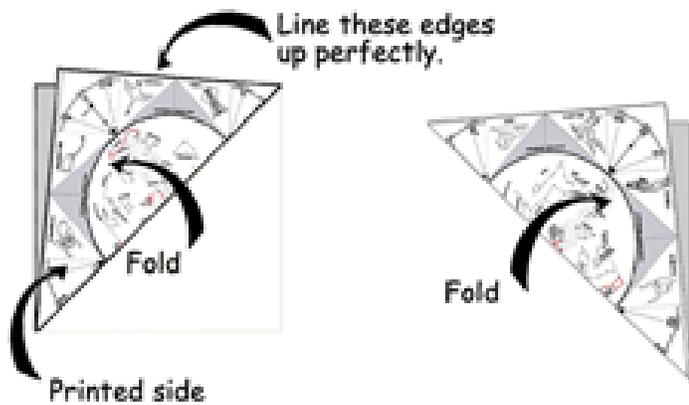
1. Find out how the planets and major moons in the solar system received their names (most are derived from mythology and literature).
2. Ask students to go outside after sunset equipped with a pad of paper, pencil and flashlight and draw as best they can some star groupings. A compass is useful for marking directions. Note the time of observation. When inside, students can compare their drawings to a star chart.
3. Make sure that students know where the North Star is in the sky as seen from their neighborhood.
4. Every culture has its own manner of forming stars into constellation patterns. Using unlabeled star charts, have students "connect-the-dots" to make their own constellations.
5. Investigate the history and culture of the ancient Egyptians, Indians, Chinese, Mesopotamians, Greeks and Romans. Can you find some star legends?
6. Note the seasonal change of nighttime constellation patterns. Can students think of a reason why they change? Might some legends account for this seasonal difference?
7. Head outside into the night sky. Try to find a place where there is minimal light pollution, but as long as you can see the stars you're doing OK. Select a patch of starry sky and imagine a new constellation by connecting different stars together. Be creative! Now sketch your newly created constellation and craft a story that helps explain how it came to be. Humans have been doing creating these stories for millennia. For inspiration, check out some mythological stories from different cultures here.

Make a Star Finder

Cut out the square on the following page to make a star finder for the month of October.

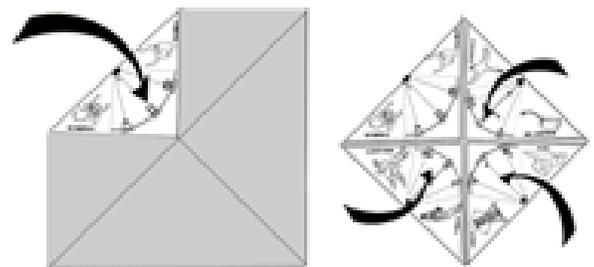
For more months visit:

<https://spaceplace.nasa.gov/starfinder/en/>

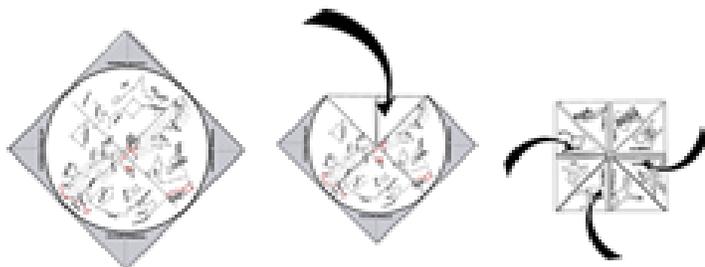


1. Fold paper diagonally.

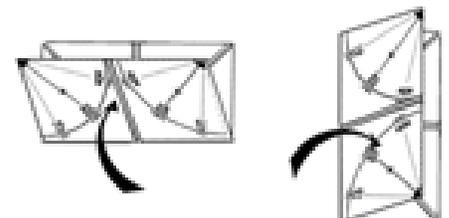
2. Fold the other two corners together.



3. Fold each corner point into the center.



4. Flip the square over, then fold all four of its corners into the center.



5. Fold in half one way, then unfold, and fold in half the other way.

