

Summer Science Activity: Constellation Construction

Celebrate the International Year of Astronomy (2009) with this simple summer activity.

Make models of constellations using pieces of plastic straws, connected with pieces of reflective tape to represent the stars.

Materials:

- Plastic straws (wash and recycle yours over the summer!)
 - Scotch™ Precision Scissors or Scotch™ Kids Scissors
 - Reflective tape
 - String
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Procedure:

1. Use a good star map as reference. You can find one in a library book, encyclopedia, or on the Internet.
2. Put your math skills into practice by measuring the straw pieces to scale. Make the models any size you like, but make sure they are accurate representations with correct proportions.
3. Cut narrow strips of reflective tape.
4. Connect the straw pieces by wrapping the tape around and around the corners to make "stars." Use extra tape for larger stars.
5. Use string to hang constellations in your windows or from your bedroom ceiling.
6. At night, turn out the lights and beam a flashlight at your creations. Your handmade stars will shine bright.

For more resources, visit www.discoveryeducation.com/sciencefaircentral.

