

Star Wheel Questions

Set the star wheel for 9pm on November 1st. the edges of the star window are where the sky meets the ground. This is called the horizon.

1. What constellation is near the northern horizon? (Ursa Major, Bootes)
2. What constellation is near the eastern horizon? (Orion, Eridanus)

The center of the star wheel is the top of the sky, over your head.

3. Name two constellations that are near the top of the sky. (Cassiopeia, Cepheus, Andromeda)

On the star wheel, bigger stars appear brighter in the sky.

4. Which constellation would be easier to see because it has more bright stars: Cassiopeia or Cepheus? (Cassiopeia)
5. Planets are not shown on the star wheel. Why not? (because they change positions over time)

Now set the star wheel for midnight on March 15.

6. Where in the sky would you look to see Canis Major? (near the western horizon)
7. Look toward the east. What constellation is about halfway between the horizon and the top of the sky in the east? (Corona Borealis (best answer) also Hercules, Bootes)

The lines connecting the stars give us an idea about which stars belong to a constellation, and offer a pattern for us to look for in the sky. Each star pattern is supposed to represent a person, object or animal. For instance, Leo is supposed to be a lion. You also may have noticed that some constellations are bigger than others.

8. What constellation in the southern sky is the largest? (Hydra)
9. What is a small constellation in the southern sky? (Corvus, Canis Minor)
10. Find Bootes. If you had to make up a story for Bootes, what sort of person, object or animal does the pattern of stars in Bootes look like to you?

Some constellations are in the sky every night, while others can only be seen during certain times of year. Try spinning the star wheel all the way around, and look for the constellations that are always visible. (The whole constellation should be visible- not just a piece of it.)

11. Name three constellations that are always in the sky. (Ursa Major and Minor, Draco, Cassiopeia, Cepheus)

Now set the time for 9 pm on your birthday.

12. What are three large or bright constellations that you could find in the sky that night?