

## Storytelling – How Constellations Came to Be

This activity will introduce children to constellations through a mythical story about how constellations came to be. Children will learn what constellations are, and how they are organized.

### What You Need:

Use the online *SkyTellers* story of *Why Coyote Howls* (<http://www.lpi.usra.edu/education/skytellers/constellations/preview.shtml>)



Other possible stories about how constellations came to be can be found in:

*Once Upon a Starry Night: A Book of Constellations*

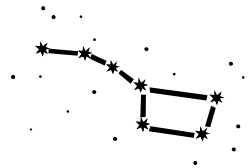
*Jacqueline Mitton, 2004, National Geographic, ISBN 0792263324*

Children ages 5–9 will enjoy hearing the Greek myths related to several constellations. Each two-page spread presents a mythical figure using short text pieces and illustrations in glowing colors with foil stars.

*American Indian Myths and Legends*

*Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz, 1985, Pantheon Books, ISBN 0394740181*

Over 100 Native American stories are presented for children ages 8 and older, including the Wasco tale "Coyote Places the Stars," another version of "Why Coyote Howls."



### What to Do:

Play *Why Coyote Howls*, or read a story about how constellations – or a constellation – came to be.

Once the story is over, invite the children to retell the story. Help them begin the story, and prompt them through the discussion. Help them remember incidents that are left out or are out of order as needed.

Discuss with the children the scientific definition of what constellations are and how they are named.

Alternatively, have the children reenact the story as a play, taking turns as the narrator. They can create songs or dance to the stories. Invite them to illustrate the stories using craft materials.

