

Feeling Starstruck?

The dark night sky has inspired creativity all around the world, even in great artists such as Vincent Van Gogh. Take a look at one of his most famous paintings below.

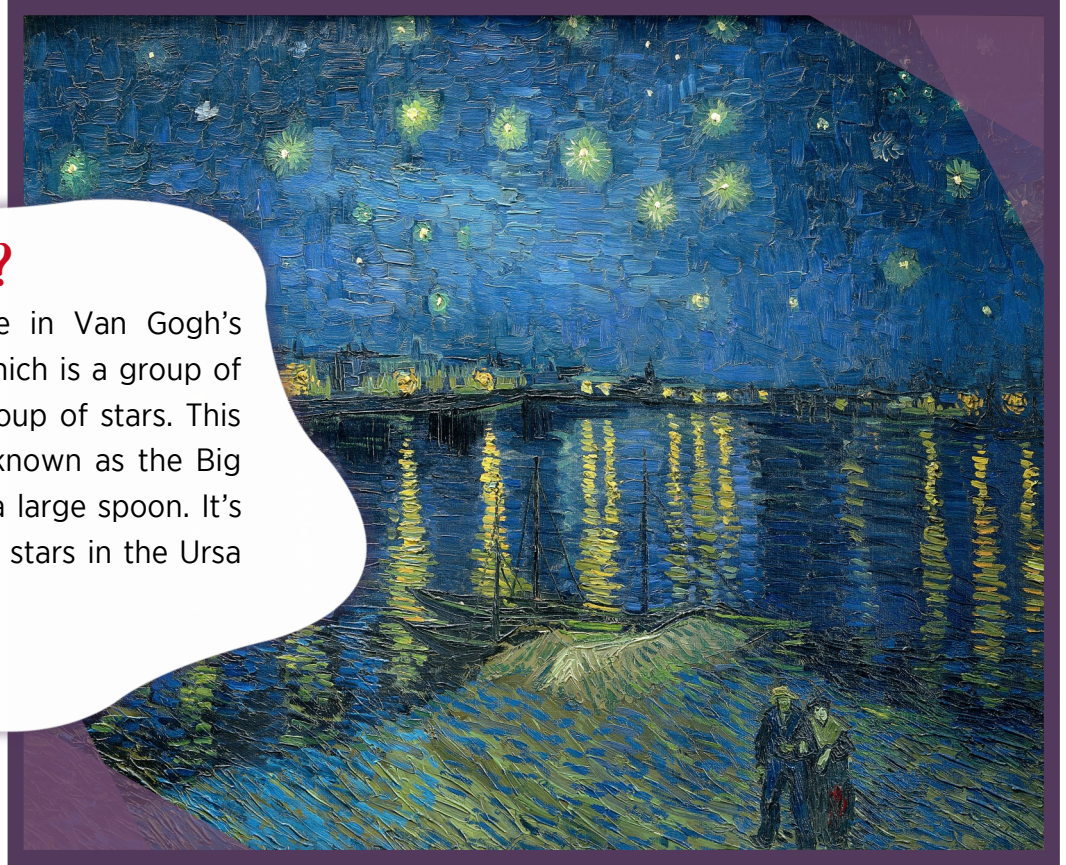
Vincent van Gogh
Starry Night Over the Rhone

DID YOU KNOW?

The star pattern you see in Van Gogh's painting is an asterism, which is a group of stars in an even larger group of stars. This particular star pattern is known as the Big Dipper since it looks like a large spoon. It's formed by the 7 brightest stars in the Ursa Major constellation.

Source of image:

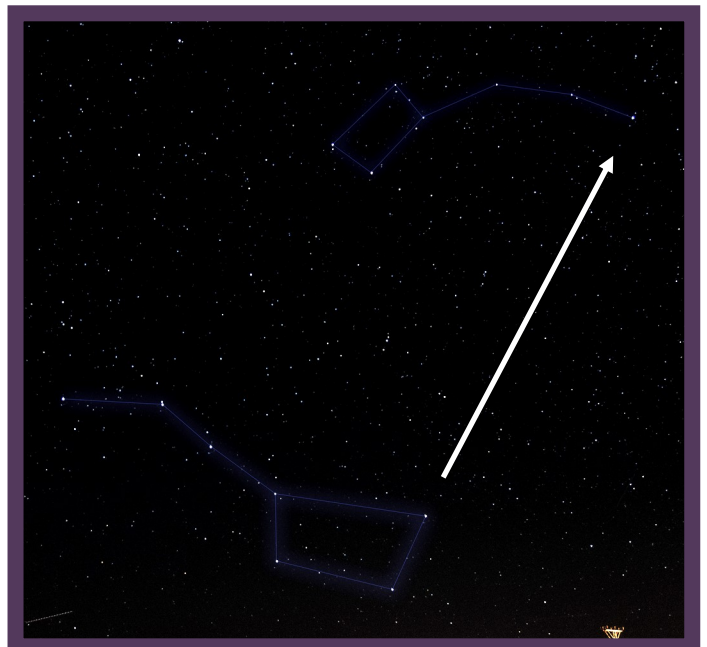
[http://art-vangogh.com/image/Arles%20\(1888-1889\)/106%20Starry%20Night%20Over%20the%20Rhone.jpg](http://art-vangogh.com/image/Arles%20(1888-1889)/106%20Starry%20Night%20Over%20the%20Rhone.jpg)



Find Polaris - the North Star

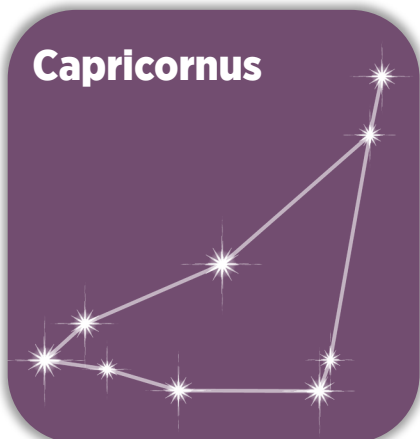
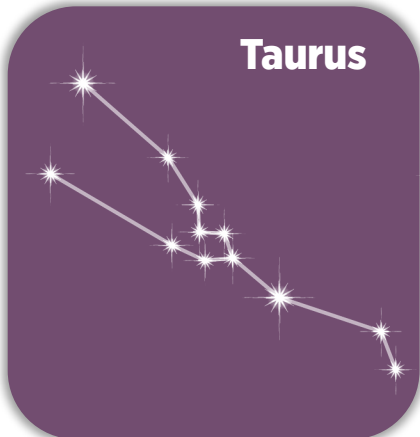
The sky changes throughout the year as the Earth orbits the sun, but Polaris is a star which is visible throughout the whole year in the northern hemisphere. Which makes it the perfect star to start your stargazing experience.

1. Find the Big Dipper.
2. Take the 7th star at the tip of the spoon bowl and draw a straight line to find Polaris.
3. The star Polaris forms part of the Ursa Minor constellation. Its 7 main stars form a pattern known as the 'Little Dipper'.
4. Polaris is the topmost star in the Little Dipper's handle.
5. Polaris marks the way North and contrary to popular belief, it is not the brightest star in the sky!



Spot the Constellation

There are quite a few prominent winter constellations in the northern hemisphere this time of year. So why not go stargazing? You might not be able to see all these constellations since it depends a lot on where you go stargazing. For example you can see Gemini if you look to the NE direction, whilst Capricornus can be found close to the horizon on the SW.



Create your own

Look up at the sky. Do you see any patterns? Does it remind you of anything? Draw the pattern you see below, give it a name, and write what it reminds you of.

DID YOU KNOW?

Ancient astronomers from the Middle East, Greek and Roman cultures looked up at the night sky and saw patterns.

They named these constellation after their stories, animals and gods.