

Read and complete the statements.

Constellations

In the past, people looked up at the night sky and "connected the dots" formed by the stars. They saw patterns that reminded them of bears, dogs, and even a sea monster! Today, scientists divide the night sky into 88 constellations. A **constellation** is a group of stars that forms a pattern. Many constellation names are the names of the star patterns that people used long ago.

The star pattern called the Little Dipper contains a star called Polaris. Polaris, or the North Star, is a very hot and very large yellow-white star. It is almost 2,500 times brighter than the sun. It does not look larger than the sun because it is much farther away. Polaris is an important star in navigation. Because it is almost directly above the North Pole, Polaris doesn't seem to move as Earth rotates. If you can find Polaris in the sky, you can tell which direction is north. Early explorers used Polaris as a guide to direct them in their travels. If they located Polaris, then they could determine which direction they were going.



1. Polaris forms part of the star pattern called the _____.
2. Polaris is almost _____ times brighter than the sun.
3. Polaris is called the North Star because it is nearly directly above the _____.
4. Polaris is an important star in _____.

Read and write what makes stars appear to move in the sky.

Stars on the Move

Stars are not always in the same place in the sky. They move in predictable ways. Suppose you looked at the sky early one evening and found the Big Dipper. When you looked two hours later, the Big Dipper seemed to have moved toward the west. Actually, the Big Dipper did not move, but you moved. The spinning of Earth makes the stars appear to move from east to west across the sky.



Answer: