

## Stellar Embroidery

A new twist on embroidery materials made for the stars!

(art + science)

Before TV and the internet existed, with their endless opportunities for entertainment and information, we looked to the night sky. Early cultures relied on the stars to navigate the oceans, to know when to plant crops, and to create magnificent stories to explain the meaning of life and the universe.

Throughout recorded history there have been relatively few changes in our night sky, and most likely everyone has had the experience of looking up with the same wonderment into a particularly bright, starry sky.

Bring some of this starry sky whimsy and wonder into the classroom while utilizing another age old practice, embroidery, on a new, unexpected surface!

In this lesson students will learn about astronomy by choosing a constellation to embroider onto a shimmering acrylic surface made from Liquitex Pouring Medium and Blick Liquid Watercolors, all enclosed within an embroidery hoop!

**GRADES 5-12** Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

### Preparation

1. Show images of constellations and discuss their historical and scientific significance.
2. Familiarize students with basic embroidery stitches. The chain stitch and French knot are particularly useful for this lesson.

### Process

1. Begin by preparing the embroidery hoop. Place a sheet protector or piece of plastic on top of cardboard or chipboard, and secure it with masking tape. Be sure the hoop is flat against the working surface. If necessary, use masking tape to seal around the outside of the hoop.
2. Pour pouring medium into the center of the embroidery hoop making sure it comes in contact with the hoop and is approximately 1/8" thick.
3. Add a few drops of Blick Liquid Watercolor to the pouring medium, along with two to three other colors. Add more watercolor for darker and more opaque color results. Gently marble the surface by dragging a craft stick in looping, swirling motion. This will be the background "fabric" to set behind your starry imagery. Put the paint aside to dry. Drying times depend on thickness of the paint as well as environmental factors. Allow at least 72 hours.
4. Gently pull the plastic film away. The center painting will remain attached to the embroidery hoop.
5. Place a printed or drawn image of a constellation underneath the hoop and dry pouring medium. Make reference dots with a permanent marker.



### Materials (required)

[Liquitex Pouring Medium](#), 32 oz bottle (02001-1009); share one bottle across class

[Blick Liquid Watercolors](#), assorted colors, 118 ml (00369-); share at least three colors across class

[Wooden Embroidery Hoop](#), (66906-); one per student

[Janlynn Embroidery Floss Packs](#), Pastel, pkg of 36 (62426-1001); share one pack across class

[Needlepoint Needles](#), #16, pkg of 2 (62419-1007); one per student

[Clear Plastic Sheets](#)

### Optional Materials

[Decorative Papers](#)

[Beads](#)

## Process, continued

- Students can choose a stitch and begin embroidering. The pouring medium is very pliable. It may stretch out some when embroidering. Simply place it flat on top of the plastic sheet and it will return to its original shape
- To hang, thread a needle and push it through near the top of the hoop. Pull the needle through and tie the ends of the string together to form a loop.



## Options

- Create layers of depth by repeating steps 2-5.
- Pour medium on top of decorative paper or a drawing before stitching.
- Use small beads with embroidery.

## National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

### Creating

**Anchor Standard 1:** Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

**Anchor Standard 2:** Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

### Responding

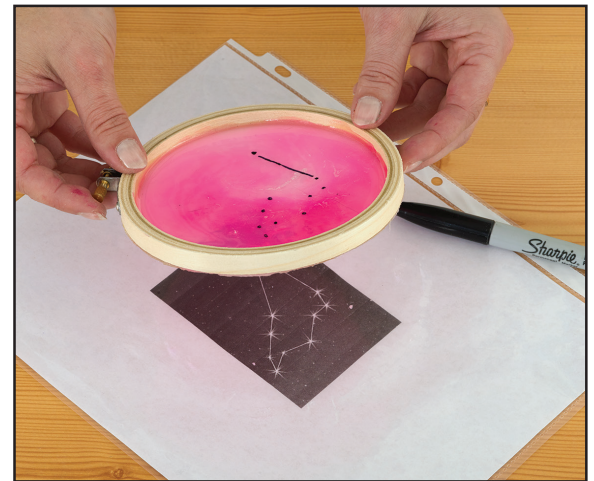
**Anchor Standard 8:** Perceive and analyze artistic work.

### Connecting

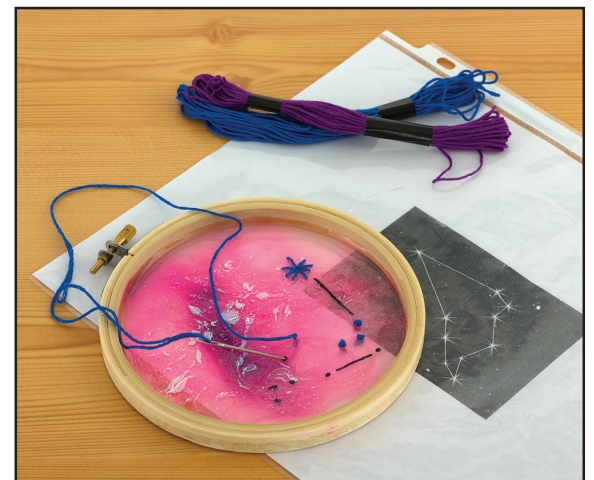
**Anchor Standard 10:** Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.



*Step 1: Pour pouring medium, filling the inside of the hoop, and add desired Blick Liquid Watercolors.*



*Step 2: Trace an image with permanent marker.*



*Step 3: Using a blunt needle, embroider the image.*

