Why the North Star Stands Still Literature Circle
Grade Level: 4
Approximate Time Length: 1 hour

GLCEs:
S.RS.04.19
Describe how people have contributed to science throughout history and across cultures.

Modification for a student with E.I.
The student will work in a smaller group than the others. Instead of counting off by numbers, the groups will be assigned. He will be assigned a role in the group that he enjoys and that has the least conflict with.

Accommodation for a student with E.I.
The student will have a paraprofessional assist him throughout the assignment, reinforcing appropriate behavior and, if necessary, allowing him to leave the classroom for a few minutes to recollect himself.

Goals:
Students will become familiar with stories and myths about different constellations through the use of fictional books.

Objective:
After listening to tales about the origins and meanings behind constellations, fourth grade students will be able to list one constellation with a brief description of its cultural background on a sheet of loose-leaf paper in the form of a group activity.
Materials Used

loose-leaf paper  
colored pencils,  
timer  
“Why the North Star Stands Still” by William Palmer

Anticipatory Set

For the first three minutes, students are going to be timed at holding different positions or making different motions. To play off the title of one of the tales, students are going to stand very still for thirty seconds. Next, there are going to walk very fast around the room for another thirty seconds, representing a shooting star. For the following thirty seconds, they are going to form a circle. In the next thirty seconds they are going to join hands and make a “wave” motion (like the ones you see at baseball games). The connecting of hands is going to represent how each individual star is important. But when they connect, they form a bigger picture. The next thirty seconds will be for the students to un-join their hands and to make their way back to their seats. For the final thirty seconds, they are going to stand as still as possible again.

Procedure

★ teacher is going to call the students over to the reading carpet  
★ she is going to introduce the book and tell how it relates to the unit  
★ she is then going to read a few sections of the book to the students, starting with the chapter on “Why the North Star Stands Still”  
★ the teacher is going to tell the students they are going to get into groups to do an activity  
★ teacher tells the students what the groups are and then tells them where to sit (the groups are already planned out, so that there is one student of every color in them)  
★ students get into their assigned groups  
★ teacher hands out a rubric for the students to go by  
★ teacher goes over rubric and assignment  
★ teacher assigns roles per group  
★ students complete their roles and the assignment  
★ groups collaborate and finish assignment  
★ groups share their projects briefly with the class, but stay in assigned groups for closure activity
Closure
What connections do you see from the different constellation names and cultural stories behind them? What constellations other constellations have we learned about that fall into this category that I did not read to you from the book?

Assessment
Students will successfully complete their roles within their assigned Literature Circle, and answer the closure questions on a piece of paper.

Assignment:
The group is going to choose one constellation discussed in the book. They are going to explore different aspects of the constellations. The group will come up with feeling the culture has toward this specific constellation, why it is important to learn about it, definitions that might be necessary for the group to know that they heard in that constellations section of the story, and if relevant a comparison to a similar constellation from a different culture.

Group Roles
The captain of the group is going to make sure the group is staying on task, as well as have their own color role. The captains will be determined by the teacher, and differ according to the needs of the group.

Color Roles:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gold</th>
<th>Orange</th>
<th>Blue</th>
<th>Green</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be the writer for everyone in the group. Make all of the ideas neatly written and in complete sentences. The gold role will also assist the green role in recording definitions.</td>
<td>Present the ideas to the classroom, either creating a newscast or radio commercial to share their ideas. They must receive their knowledge from the other members in their group.</td>
<td>The blue role is to come up with emotions the culture has towards that constellation, and if there is a constellation in another group that is similar. If needed, the blue role may assist in presenting the information to the class.</td>
<td>To fulfill this role, the student will look up definitions to go along with the story they heard. They will also look up synonyms and antonyms for feeling to aid the blue roles descriptions.</td>
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**Sources**

“Community of Colors” Packet  
“Why the North Star Stands Still” by William Palmer  
“Civil War Literature Circle” example by Susan Weber  
“Literature Circles” handout