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## **Qu'est-ce qu'il y a dans le ciel étoilé? Basic Astronomy for Middle School French Students**

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This unit will use the idea of constellations as a vehicle by which to teach basic astronomy content to middle school French language students. Other foreign language teachers are encouraged to use this framework and adapt the vocabulary to suit the teaching of any other language. Learning will be centered around the constellations, those imagined images one can form by connecting the star dots in the sky. Students will learn names of stars and constellations, the concept of magnitudes of brightness, the names of all 20 brightest stars in our sky, light-year distance relations, and why our views of the stars changes over the course of a year; that learning will revolve around the foundation of constellation images.

This information that is otherwise meaningless to the average middle school student will now feel meaningful. Students will relate the factual information to the pictures they will see in the sky; in this way constellations will become the ultimate memory tool! Students will not learn the vocabulary because they memorized it, but instead, because they used it. Meaning-based learning is fundamental, and students remember vocabulary that they need. The unit will culminate in several different art-based projects designed to appeal to a broad spectrum of learners.

This unit is designed for middle school French language students.

(Developed for French, grade 8; recommended for French, grades 7-8)

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