



Galaxy dots:

Exploring the cosmos through art

Volume 145 | Gr. 3-5

Time: 2 class periods
(1 hour each)

National Art Standards

Creating: Anchor Standard 1:

Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Creating: Anchor Standard 2:

Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Presenting: Anchor Standard 4:

Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.

Responding: Anchor Standard 7:

Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Connecting: Anchor Standard 10:

Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

CCSS

ELA.W.4.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

ELA.W.4.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

ELA.SL.4.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

ELA.RL.4.3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.

Objectives

Students will be able to ...

- Create a unique piece of art inspired by galaxies while exploring color blending and watercolor techniques
- Practice creative writing skills by naming the galaxy and writing a short story about the creatures that live on a planet in that galaxy



Directions

Creating galaxy dots

1. Provide a brief explanation of galaxies: Galaxies are massive systems of stars, gas, dust, and dark matter, all held together by gravity. Our galaxy, the Milky Way, is just one of billions in the universe! Some galaxies look like swirling spirals, while others are more elliptical or irregular. Each galaxy could hold planets with unique environments and creatures.
2. Show images of different galaxies, stars, and nebulae to spark imagination.
 - **NASA's HubbleSite** (hubblesite.org)
 - **JWST Gallery** (webbtelescope.org)
 - **Animation of the Milky Way** (esa.int/Science_Exploration/Space_Science/Gaia/Last_starlight_for_ground-breaking_Gaia/)
3. Then, ask students these brainstorm sparks: "If you could create your own galaxy, what would it look like? What colors would you use?"
4. Introduce the materials they will use in the art project and explain how these materials will help them bring their galaxy to life.
5. Then, demonstrate how to use glitter watercolors on the mixed media paper circles. Show blending techniques and how to create galaxy textures. Explain how to use black markers or white gel pens to add details like stars or constellations.
6. Have students start by doing a few thumbnail drawings of what they want their galaxies to look like. Then, have them choose their favorite and lightly sketch elements on their paper circles.



Step 2



Step 5



Step 6



Step 7



Step 8



Step 9

7. Encourage students to create the base layer of their galaxy designs on the paper circles using the colors and techniques discussed.
8. Prompt them to incorporate elements that reflect the beings they envision living in their galaxy.
9. Allow students to add finishing touches to their galaxy dots using gold thread, glitter, or gems to enhance their artwork.

Short stories

1. Encourage students to discuss what kind of life forms they envision in their personal galaxy and how those creatures might interact with their environment.
2. Then, have them name their galaxy and some of its stars and planets and write a short story about the creatures that inhabit one of the planets in their galaxy.
3. Encourage students to use their imaginations and senses by asking these leading questions:
 - What do the creatures in your galaxy look like?
 - What do they eat, and how do they find their food?
 - What plants grow in this galaxy? What do they look and smell like?
 - Do the creatures live on land, in water, or somewhere else entirely?
 - What sounds (if any) are heard in their environment?
 - How do the creatures adapt to the unique challenges of their galaxy?
4. After students finish the writing and editing process, create a bulletin board display titled "Stories from the Stars" and display student artwork and stories.



Materials list

- Prang® Mixed Media Paper Circles - 9" ([NE20579](#))
- Nasco Washable Liquid Watercolors – Glitter, Set of 8 ([NE20721](#))
- Paintbrushes ([9723226](#))
- Black markers or pens (optional for detailing) ([9726858](#))
- White and gold gel pens ([NE20557](#))
- Assorted embellishments (glitter, stars, gems, gold thread) ([9726692](#))
- Glue ([9729431](#))
- Water containers
- Reference images of galaxies, stars, and nebulae
- Writing paper for short stories

