

Follow the Stars Activity Guide



Toshiko Takaezu

Selected Works from the *Star Series*, 1999 – 2000

Glazed stoneware

14 pieces ranging from 46" to 68" in height

Collection of the Racine Art Museum, Gift of the Artist

Photography: Michael Tropea, Chicago

1. Breath- imagine you are floating in the universe and looking down at the earth below.
2. Look at the image above.
What do you see?
The title of this series of clay pieces by artist Toshiko Takaezu is called *Star Series*.
Toshiko Takaezu treated glazes as paint, offering abstract compositions of color and drips.
Look at the glaze on the surface of these objects. Think about all the colors and designs in the sky at night and in the universe.
Imagine you are floating in space. What do you see?
3. Outside Activity
Go outside at night and look up to the stars. See if you can find any star constellations. Use the guide below to help you identify them. See how many you can find!
4. Poetry Exercise – say a line and repeat together:
Star light, star bright, first Star I see tonight
I wish I may, I wish I might
Have this wish I wish
Find a star in the sky and make a wish!
5. More about the *Star Series*:
Toshiko Takaezu's *Star Series*, a massive grouping of 13 forms that has been described as a "masterpiece." The series, with large enclosed vessel forms named after stars or star-related entities, can be configured in numerous ways. As with other works, Takaezu treats the glazes as paint, offering abstract compositions of color and drips. Each piece was hand-built with clay coils over a 5-day period.
6. Art Activity 1: Coil Pots
Make a coil pot! Using pieces of air dry clay or homemade clay (see recipe below), take a piece of clay and roll it into a ball, flatten the ball on the surface of your table by pressing down with your palm. This will be the base. Next, take pieces of clay and roll them into a snake forms. Score the base of the clay with a toothpick or fork. Add a little slip (mix of water and clay), like a glue. Start winding the clay coils around the base, score and slip each new coil, keep going until you have built up your pot size. Smooth the edges on the inside and outside. Let your pot dry for a few day. Finish the surface by adding paint – pour or drip the paint to mimic Toshiko's surface design.
Coil pot video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJQ5FG9o3C0>
Homemade clay recipe:
<https://www.homeschooling-ideas.com/how-to-make-clay.html#bakingclay>
7. Art Activity 2: Paint the Universe!
Splatter and drip paint on a dark sheet of paper, to mimic the drip design of Toshiko Takaezu's *Star Series*. Use brushes, or a tooth brush, and colors of your choice to make your universe!
Make sure you cover your table surface first and put on a smock....this can get messy!

8. Art Activity 3: Draw a Star Constellation
On a dark sheet of paper, draw with white or yellow chalk or crayons a star constellation. Use the guide below to mimic the real star constellations or make up your own.
9. Art Activity 4: Star Resist Painting
Take a white crayon on draw stars or a star constellation on to white paper. Paint your idea of the galaxy with watercolor paints on top of the crayon. Your stars will shine through the paint, just like the stars shine through
10. Create your own gallery!
Create a STAR GALLERY in your house and make your own art exhibition. Invite your family to your art opening. Serve star shaped cookies!

Constellation Guide

