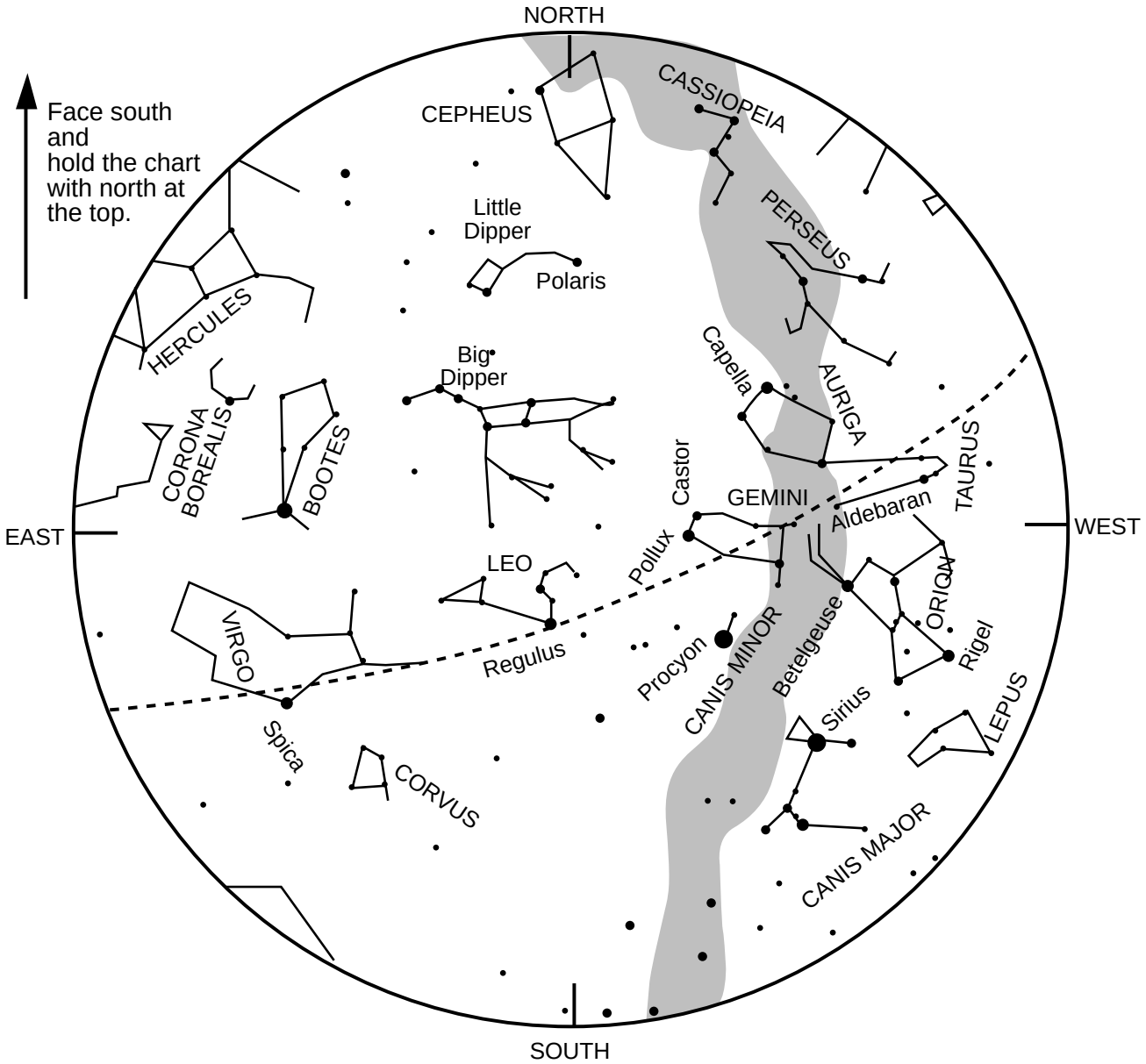
Table of Contents

Pictures in the Sky *(cont.)*

Spring Constellations

The gray patch represents the Milky Way, an area of faint light coming from the distant stars at the outer edge of the galaxy in which we live (Milky Way Galaxy). This area reminded ancient astronomers of spilled milk, so they named it the *Milky Way*.



More About the Dipper *(cont.)*

Star Clock

To the Student: Although our earth does not seem to be moving, it is really spinning fast. If you watch the stars, they look like they move around Earth. Long ago, people thought they did. Today, we know Earth is spinning on its axis, making the stars appear to move around us.

The circumference of the Earth at the equator is about 24,000 miles (40,000 km). Earth spins once in 24 hours. Circle how fast you would be spinning in miles (km) per hour at the equator.

2,400 (4,000 km) 1,000 (600 km) 24 (40 km)

You spin slower as you move from the equator to the poles, where you would be standing still. The north end of Earth's axis points to Polaris, the North Star. All the other stars seem to be making circles around Polaris. See how the Big Dipper can be used as a clock as it circles the North Star.

Directions: Cut out and assemble the Star Clock circles so the smaller circle (Time) is over the larger one. Line up the two black dots and poke a hole through them. Push a brass fastener through these to hold the two circles together.

Take a Star Clock out at night and look for the Big and Little Dippers. Turn the clock until the present month is at the top. Turn the Big Dipper around until it matches up with what you see in the sky. Look at the time through the window. It should show the approximate real time.