Learning to recognize the main constellations and making a star map

This is a convenient home task, and is best done about the time of a new moon. The moonlight does not then interfere with a good view of the stars. The Pole Star should be identified first, and it is helpful to take outside a piece of brown paper with pinholes pricked through it in the form of a few of the constellations. When the paper is held up to any light the pinholes become visible, and the paper can be rotated until a similar star pattern is recognized. A star map, with the Pole Star as centre, can soon be built up. After a few constellations have been learnt in this way, it is instructive to make one map in the early evening, and one just before going to bed. Another interesting way of recognizing constellations is to take outside a blackboard and stick into it luminous (phosphorescent) buttons to represent the stars.