Glitter Galaxies

Equipment Checklist:
(To get reimbursed for purchasing materials, present receipt to Lorenza.)

- glitter: (large containers available at JoAnn's or Hobby Lobby)
  - gold
  - blue
  - red
  - silver (optional)
- small clear plastic plates
- Elmer's or craft glue
- opaque plastic trays
- paper funnel (optional, for returning excess glitter to containers)

Set-up:

Arrange all materials on your workspace. Because glitter has a tendency to get everywhere and embed itself in carpet, this activity works best outside.

Activity:

Using glitter, students will create the spiral arms of a galaxy on the clear plastic plates. The plates can then be held up and viewed at different angles. The students may keep their galaxies when they are done.

You can show the effects of inclination on spiral galaxies by using the shadow of the glitter galaxy. Hold the galaxy so that its shadow is not inclined and ask the students if it's easy or hard to count how many arms there are. Tilt the plate so the shadow is more inclined and ask them again. Tilt the plate so the galaxy is almost edge-on and ask again.

If possible, have the students construct their galaxies on the plastic trays to catch the excess glitter. Make a funnel out of a sheet of paper in order to help put the excess glitter back in the containers at the end of the activity.