For Parents and Guardians

Welcome to the online version of The Great Circle Artist-in-Residence program, a unique collaboration between The Rockwell Museum and the Elmira and Bath School Districts. Observation, memory and creativity go hand in hand. The first step to remembering is paying careful attention. When your child looks carefully, they see interesting things others may miss. Talking about what they have seen, heard and experienced helps fix it in memory. So does writing about the observation or making art about it. When your child creates, past observations and memories are a treasure of ideas to use and manipulate. The deeper the observations, the richer the memories, the more possibilities your child has to draw upon when there is a problem to be solved. Spending time looking and listening with your child will open their mind.

You can help with conversations, reading, printing and how to use links. Words in bold purple have links to an icon that speaks the word. In this lesson, your child will be learning about the power of the sun and the solar system. Perhaps this is a good time to explore transferring your electric bill to a community solar farm if you have not already.

HERE is a bonus for you, the adult: a unique way to perceive the solar system.

District wide implementation for all first grade students in the Elmira City School District has been made possible in part with the support from The Anderson Foundation, Inc., Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes, Inc., M&T Bank and The Tripp Foundation.

District implementation for all first grade students in the Bath Central School District has been made possible by the generous support from the Edith Saxton Fund for Steuben County Youth Services. The Saxton Fund is administered and managed by the Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes, Inc.
**Something Round: The Sun**

Do you remember Black Elk’s idea about the Great Circle? He said, “The power of the world always works in circles, and everything tries to be round.”

Our round planet Earth **orbits** the sun. The sun is round too. Earth is not the only planet that orbits the sun. These are all the planets that orbit the sun: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. All of them are round. All of them go around the sun. Do you love things in outer space? If so, click **HERE** for fun things for kids to do from NASA.

Guess the correct **answers** about our sun:

1. The sun is:
   - A) a star
   - B) as bright as a flashlight
   - C) the biggest planet of all

2. The sun, planets and moons form:
   - A) a kid’s club
   - B) the **solar** system
   - C) the universe

3. We call it a solar system because the word solar means things related to:
   - A) our Earth
   - B) the sun
   - C) the planets

   *[Answers are on page 8]*
Earth’s moon is round too. Sometimes it does not look round. That is because some of it is in shadow, and we cannot see the dark part. The moon is a very big rock. The moon orbits the Earth. There are over 200 moons in the solar system, and our planet only has one.

**SONG**

**HERE** is a fun song [video](#) about the solar system. Watch and tell: What did you see? What did you learn? Which is your favorite planet? If you liked the song, watch the video again and learn something more. Can you sing along?

**STORY**

**HERE** is a Great Circle story about the sun and moon. Black Elk’s tribe and other Native American tribes told many stories about [Coyote](#) and the round objects in the sky. Watch this story and try to remember it. It will be easy to remember if you tell it to someone in your own words or have fun acting it out.
MAKE ART

You can use the power of the sun to make art. You will need a sheet of colored construction paper, a pair of kids’ scissors, a big book and some time.

{Note to parents: Paper that fades is needed for this project. Construction paper works well, but it needs to be fresh from a tablet or pack and not already old and faded. Colored copy paper works, but will take much longer. This is a DIY version of a solar printing kit.}

- Watch the weather report. A day or two before it will be sunny is time to start.
- Make a clear space on a table.
- Go outdoors with small scissors. Look for a few small flat things in nature. Flat leaves work well. Cut off a leaf or other object. Just take a few.
- Bring the things inside. Place them on the table. Put a big book on them. Wait.
- Keep them there until the sunny day.
- On the sunny day, put colored paper on a table beside a sunny window.
- Take the book off your flat things. Use them to make a design on the paper. Do not use glue. Just lay them down. You will not see the color of the leaf in your art, only the paper color. Wait.
- Leave it alone all day in the sun. Late in the day, lift a little of one object to take a peek. If you see darker and lighter colors, lift all the things off. If the paper still looks the same, wait another day or more. When a peek looks good, remove all the objects. The more time in the sun, the more the paper will fade and the better your design will show.
- Show someone your art. You made Great Circle art using the power of the sun!
• When you stay home a lot and can’t go buy new things, you can reuse what you have. You can use the paper from this art again. When you are done enjoying this art project, put it in the sun until all the paper fades. Now you can use the paper for another art project.

**ACTIVITY: MATCHING GAME**

• Cut out each square picture on the next page.

• On a table or the floor, turn them all over. Mix them up.

To play:

• Decide who will go first.

• The first player flips over two cards.

• If they match, that player wins the two cards and says one thing about the picture.

• If the cards do not match, the player turns them over in the same place.

• The next player chooses two cards and tries to match.

• Take turns playing until all the cards are gone.

• You can play this game alone too. When you play alone, count how many times it takes to match them all.

• Try to beat your own score.
**Answers** about our sun:

1. The sun is **A) a star!** Some stars are just as bright as the sun, and some even brighter. Other stars look tiny because they are so far away.

2. The sun, planets and moons form **B) the solar system.** Did you know Earth is not the only planet with a moon? Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune all have moons!

3. Solar means things related to **B) the sun.** Have you heard of solar energy? That is the energy of the sun.

**BE THE CIRCLE**

Every time you protect living and growing things on Earth, you are part of the Great Circle. It is easy to help by using the power of the sun. The sun gives us light and heat. When you use the power of the sun instead of a lamp, you are helping save **electricity.**

That is good for the Earth. When you are reading or writing during the day, move closer to a window. If it is a nice day, you can read outdoors or on a porch. When you use the light of the sun, you do not need to turn on a lamp.

*Thank you for being a Great Circle helper!*