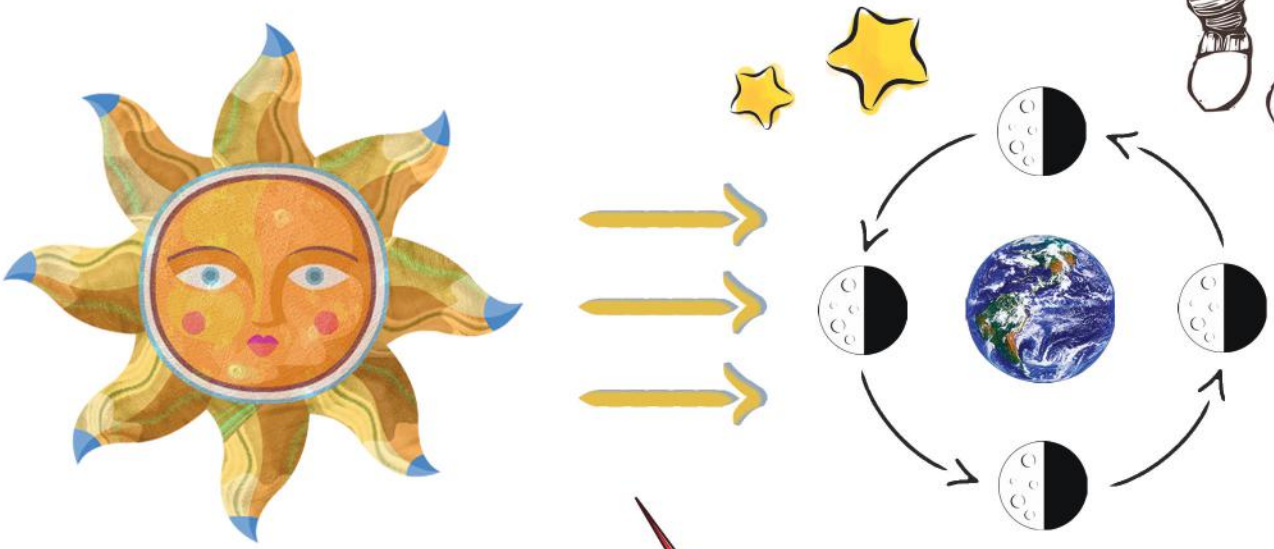
PBS KIDS SciGirls
pbskids.org/scigirls

Why does the moon look different each night?

As the moon travels around the Earth, the sun always lights up one side. We see different amounts depending on the moon's position. When the Earth is between the sun and the moon, we see a full moon. But when the moon is between the sun and the earth, we see a new moon which is dark. It takes the moon about 28 days to make a complete trip around the Earth and go through each phase.



Words to Know

"Waxing" moons are growing
"Waning" moons are shrinking
"Crescent" moons curve in on one side
"Gibbous" moons curve out on both sides

Phases of the Moon

1. new moon
2. waning crescent
3. first quarter
4. waxing gibbous
5. full moon
6. waning gibbous
7. last quarter
8. waning crescent

Make a Moon Flipbook

1. Cut out each page for your flipbook along the dotted lines.
2. Stack the pages by number and staple them together along the left edge.
3. Draw what the moon looks like each day until all the pages are filled.
4. Flip the pages quickly to see your moon in action!