

Name: _____

Solar Energy: The Power of the Sun

by Kelly Hashway

We all know the sun is important. It provides for plants, animals, and people here on Earth. But how does the sun do that? It's the sun's energy that makes life on our planet possible.

Energy from the sun is called solar energy. It comes in the form of light or heat. Solar energy is what makes you feel hot when you sit in the sunlight. People have used solar energy for thousands of years. Houses were built with



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called solar thermal energy.

We can also turn the sun's light into electricity. This is done with solar panels. Solar panels are made up of a material called silicon. The silicon is heated and formed into very thin wafers. When the sunlight hits the solar panel, the electrons (tiny particles) in the silicon move and flow through wires built into the solar panel. Using this technology, we can run a calculator and even power cars.

solar panel into the batteries. This stored electricity can be used at night or on cloudy days.

Did you know that solar energy is not as expensive as it used to be? In fact, in the last few years, solar panels have become much more affordable for people to use. Since the sun gives off more energy in one second than people have used since the beginning of time, imagine what we could do if we used the sun's energy to power our planet.

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1. What are solar panels used for?
- a. to block the sun's dangerous rays
 - b. to create light energy from the sun
 - c. to create heat energy from the sun
 - d. to create electrical energy from the sun



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- a. electrons
- b. heat
- c. silicon
- d. hydrogen

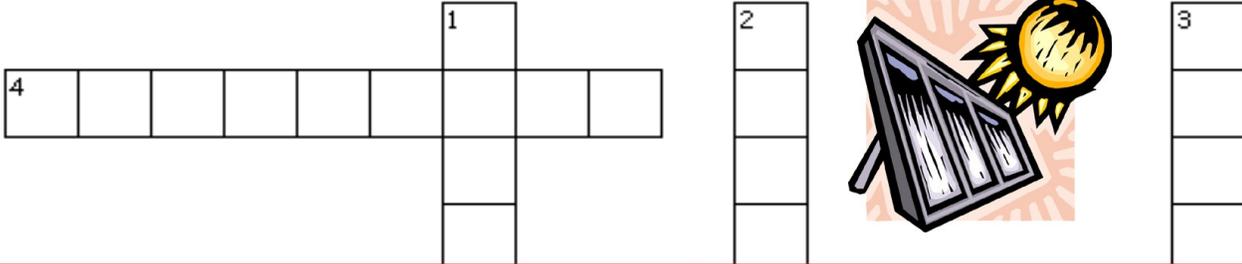
4. What is solar thermal energy?
- a. energy produced by solar panels
 - b. heat energy from the sun
 - c. energy stored in batteries
 - d. heat energy from water
5. Write another appropriate title for this passage. Do not use the word "solar" or "power" in your new title.

Now try this: Find a solar powered calculator. Try to use it next to a bright window. Then, try to use it in a dark room. What happens?

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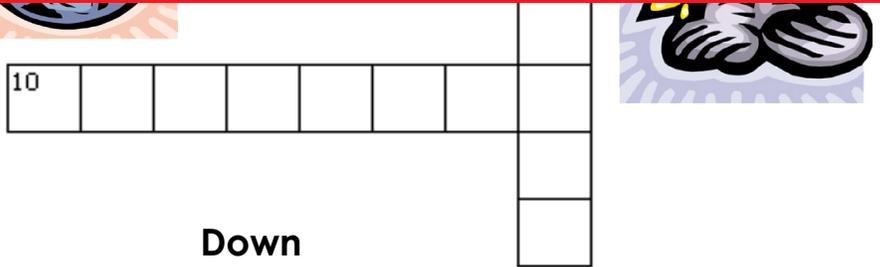
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Use words from the article,
"Solar Energy: The Power of the Sun"
to complete the crossword.



Across

4. costly
5. planet that we live on
9. tool for making objects appear larger
10. light from the sun

Down

1. material used to make solar panels
2. objects that store electrical energy
3. glass-covered openings in houses that let light in
6. warmth
7. opposite of day
8. tool for adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing numbers

ANSWER KEY

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1. What are solar panels used for? **d**

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