

THE WORLD FROM FAR AWAY

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THE WORLD FROM CLOSE UP

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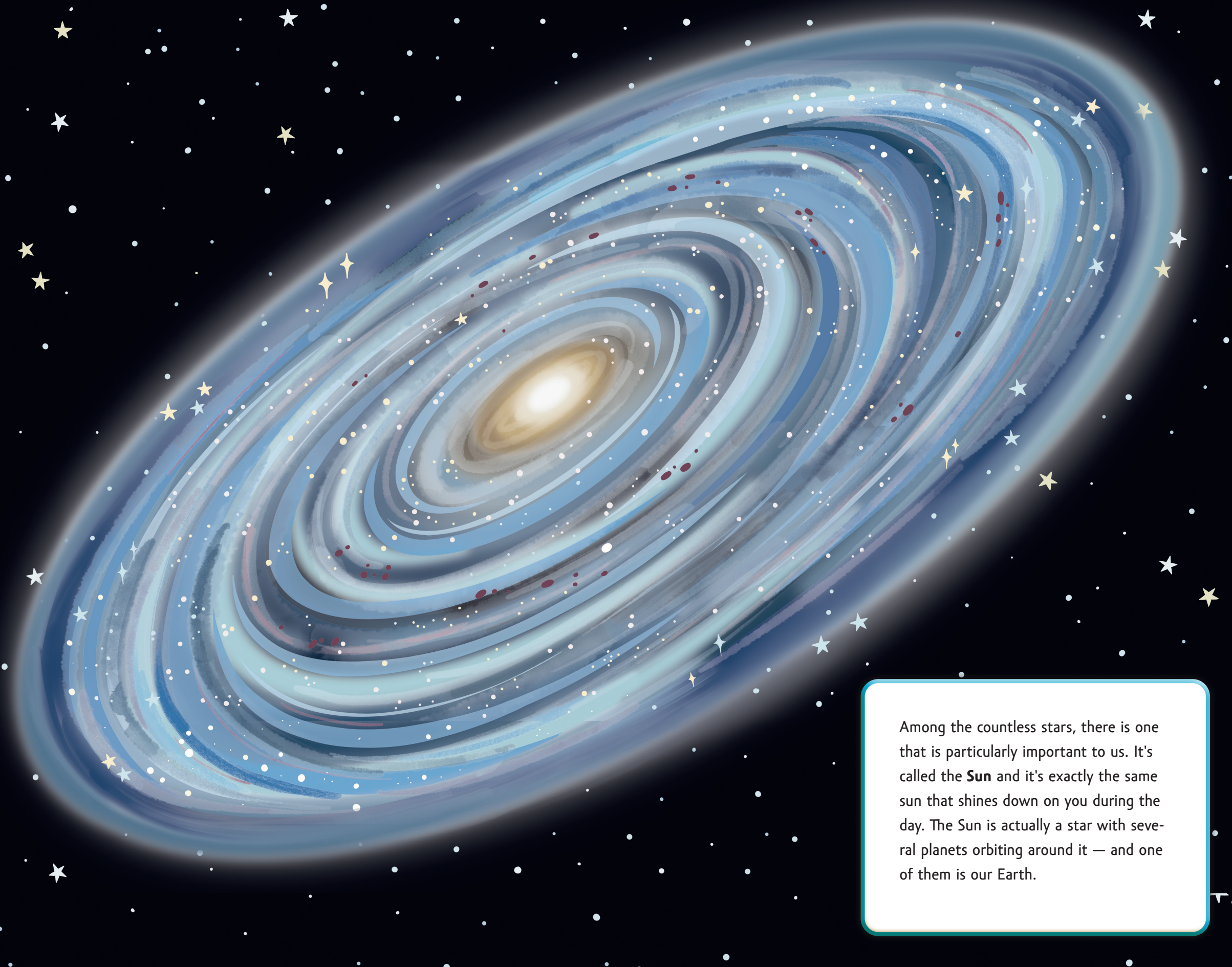


GALAXIES

Have you ever looked up at night and noticed a hazy whitish band of light in the dark sky? This band of light is called the **Milky Way**, and when you look at it from the Earth, you're only seeing a tiny bit of it. It looks something like this:



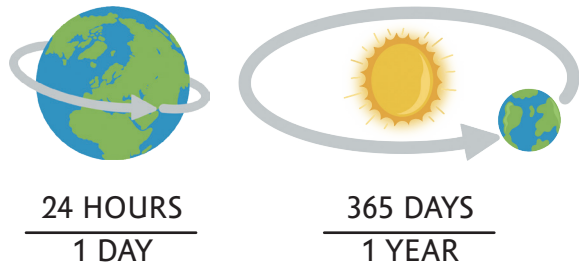
When viewed from space, the Milky Way is in the shape of a disc and so immense that it's almost impossible to imagine. And the Milky Way is just one of many galaxies in the universe. A galaxy is actually a grouping of stars, interstellar dust, gases, and dark matter. The Milky Way contains several hundred billion stars.



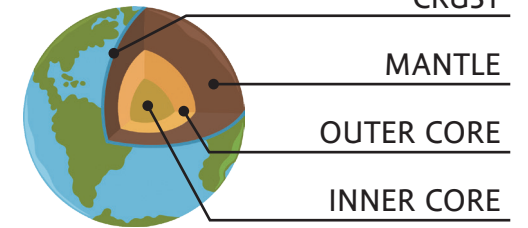
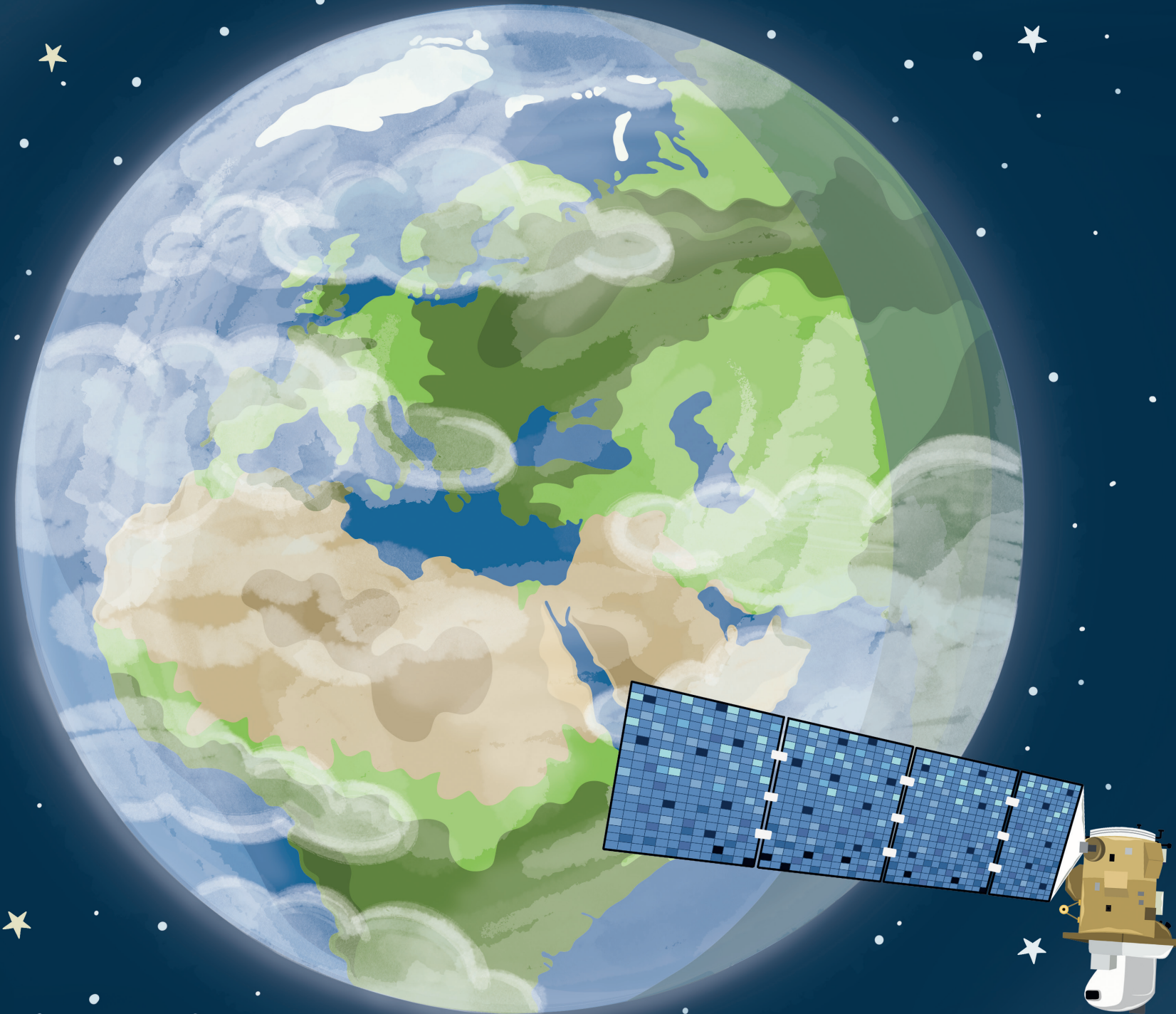
Among the countless stars, there is one that is particularly important to us. It's called the **Sun** and it's exactly the same sun that shines down on you during the day. The Sun is actually a star with several planets orbiting around it — and one of them is our Earth.

EARTH

The Earth is the only planet we know of where there is life. More than 70% of its surface is covered by oceans, which is why our home is sometimes called the blue planet.



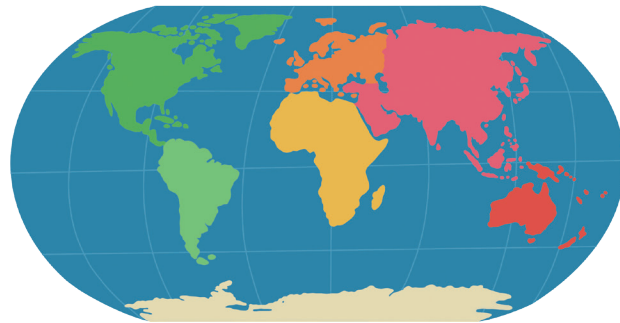
Even though it doesn't seem like it to us, the Earth is constantly moving. It orbits the Sun and, at the same time, rotates around its axis — like when you spin a globe. It takes the Earth one year to travel all the way around the Sun and 24 hours for it to turn a full circle. And it's because of this that we have day and night on Earth. When one half of the Earth is facing the Sun, it is day on that half, while on the other side of the planet it is night.



Have you ever wondered what the Earth is made of? If we were able to cut it open, what would we find? On the surface is the Earth's **crust**, on which we all live. Below the crust is the earth's **mantle**, and right in the very middle is the scorching hot **core**.

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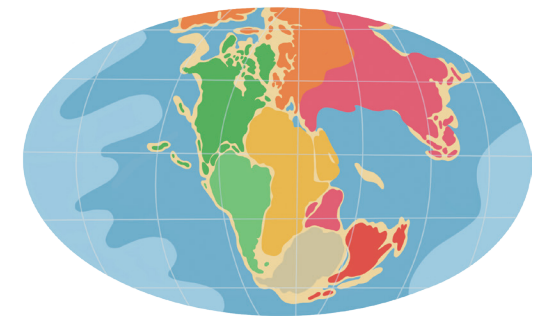
Right now you are looking at Europe from a distance of 500 km. Europe is one of the world's seven continents. A continent is a large continuous area of land.



- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| ■ North America | ■ Asia |
| ■ South America | ■ Australia |
| ■ Africa | ■ Antarctica |
| ■ Europe | |

It may seem to you that the individual continents are permanent and never change, but the truth is that they are in constant motion. The outer crust of the Earth is made up of **tectonic plates**, which are continually shifting. When they collide, they reshape the surface of the planet. Massive mountain ridges rise up, the oceans grow larger or smaller, and the continents collide or move apart.

Long ago, all the continents were joined together in one undivided landmass. It was a supercontinent named **Pangea**.



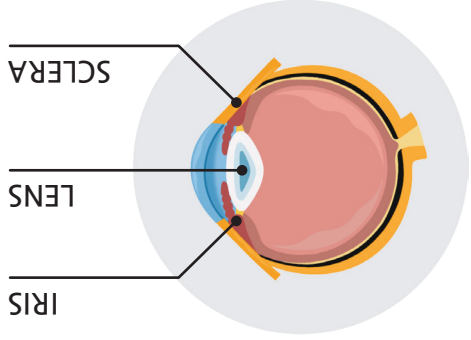
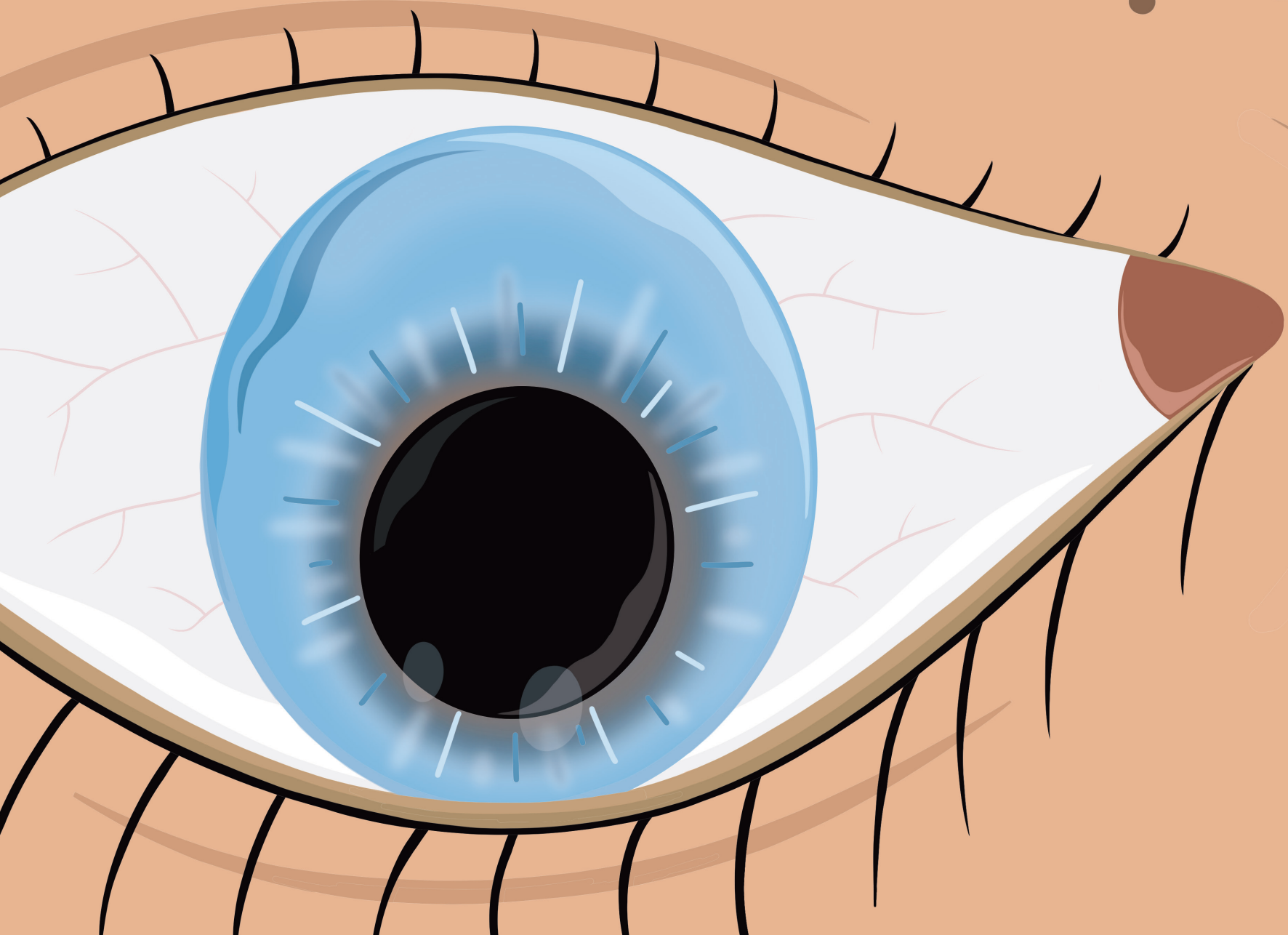
**YOU AND YOUR
FRIENDS**



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EYE

You are now looking at the human eye from close up. And it's a really ingenious thing. The eye allows us to see, and, for us humans, sight is our main sense for perceiving the world around us. Roughly 80% of what we perceive of the world comes to us through our sight. Do you know that when you look at someone's eye you're only seeing part of it? The whole eye is ball-shaped and about the size of a ping pong ball.



SCLERA

LENS

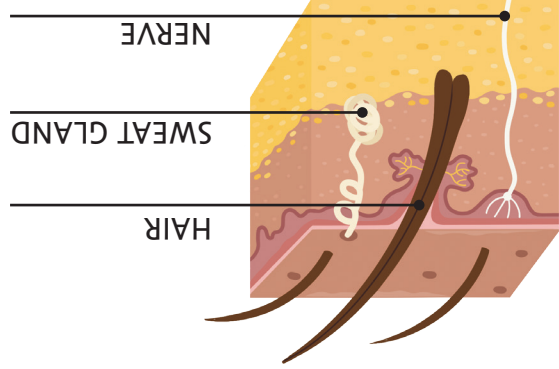
IRIS

Just as the colour of our skin and hair varies, so does the colour of our eyes. The coloured part of the eye is called the **iris** and ranges from light blue through green to dark brown. The black part in the middle is called the **lens** and there is a white **sclera** around the iris.

SKIN

This is human skin seen through a microscope. The skin is the largest organ of the human body. It consists of individual **cells** that are replaced with new ones every four weeks.

A CROSS-SECTION OF SKIN



Our skin performs a number of essential functions. The skin is an organ of a very important sense — touch. It receives information from the outside world via **nerves** and sends this information to the brain. On top of that, it protects the insides of our body from all kinds of bacteria and viruses. There are lots of tiny organisms on the surface of our skin, some of which are harmful, while others are good.

Our skin also helps our bodies maintain a constant temperature with the aid of **sweat glands**. When our body starts to overheat, like when we play sports or have a fever, sweating cools us down.



DNA

You are looking at **human DNA**. Every cell in all living things contains DNA, whether it's a human or a dandelion. DNA is what determines who you are and what you look like. Your parents have passed on some of their DNA to you, making you the completely unique person you are.




You need to know how DNA works if you have a job, for example, in medicine or archaeology, or if you're conducting a criminal investigation. Evidence taken at the scene of a crime, such as hair, blood or bits of skin, can help forensic investigators determine the kind of person who committed the crime.

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