

## Hot Energy!

By Rashida Registe

What is **solar power**? It is energy we get from our sun! Did you know that solar power is a **renewable** source of energy? Since the sun will keep shining for billions of years to come, we will not run out of solar energy for a long, long time.

People have been using solar power for thousands of years. Ancient Greeks used the sun to heat their homes. Since they knew that the position of the sun changed with the seasons, they were able to construct their buildings so that the sun directly hit them in the winter, but not in the summer when they wanted to stay cool. Some homes are still heated this way. This technique is called **passive solar heating**. Another example of passive solar heating is when sunlight shines on a pool and warms the water.

How else do we use solar power? **Solar cells** collect energy from **sunlight** and convert it into **electricity**. An example of this is a calculator that does not have a battery, but runs instead off of energy from sunlight. But we can also put lots of solar cells together into big panels that collect enough energy to provide homes and businesses with electricity.

I hope you've learned a lot about how we use energy from the sun!

**Solar Power Fun Facts:** Every 20 days the planet Earth receives as much energy from sunlight as there is estimated to be in all the coal, oil and natural gas combined!