

The **AMAZING SPACE RACE**

A Downtown Huntsville Public Art Adventure



This adventure includes 11 stops and is designed for children in grades K–5. It's aligned with the [Alabama Course of Study](#), making it a great experience for families and educators. For a more traditional downtown art tour of a similar duration, we recommend our Downtown Art Essentials Tour.

GET READY FOR LAUNCH!

You are a Space Racer on a mission through Downtown Huntsville in your very own rocket! Keep an eye on your rocket's window to see some awesome surprises as you zoom around Huntsville.

Your Assignment:

Explore Downtown Huntsville's public art!

The **Artonians**, travelers from a faraway galaxy, have been exploring too! They have left their findings for you in this guide. Investigate the art and learn what they discovered during their travels through Downtown Huntsville.

If you are also on the [Lucky Duck Scavenger Hunt](#), be sure to check your radar for **DUCK ALERTS** as you explore! When you get a Duck Alert, look around and see if you can spot a duck nearby.



Map it!



Use your device to find directions for each stop.

3... 2... 1... BLAST OFF, SPACE RACER!



Launch Ahead! Travelers II (2022) - David Dahlquist and Matt Niebuhr



South side of Big Spring Park across from the AC Hotel



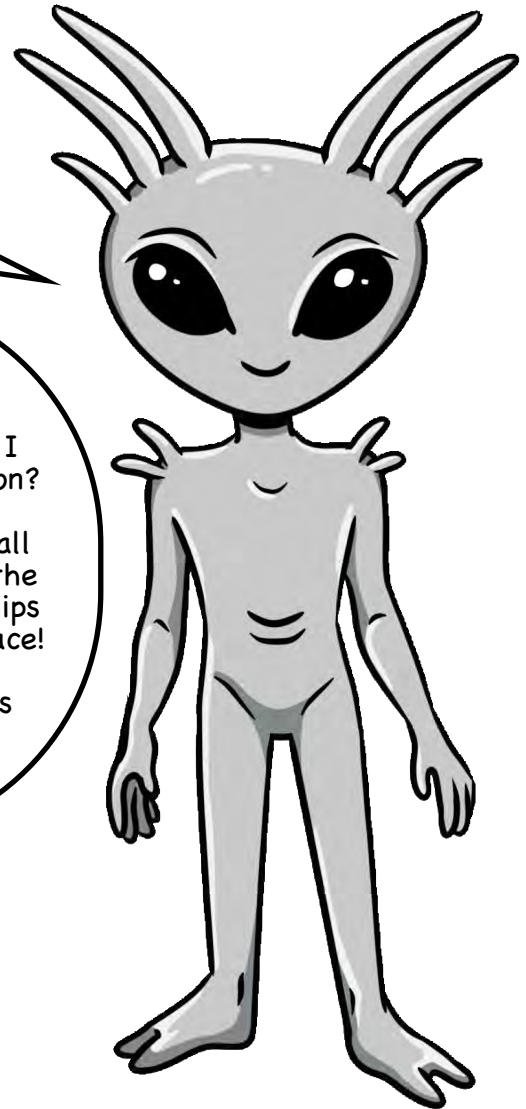
If you see a **Duck Alert**, that means there is a duck from the Lucky Duck Scavenger Hunt near by the artwork.

Greetings, traveler. I am an Artonian. We are cosmic travelers, and that's exactly what this specific artwork is about! This sculpture is called 'Travelers II.'

Artonians are very knowledgeable in art and have lots in common with different art pieces! What do I and the artwork have in common?

Look at those big curves, we call those PARABOLAS. They make the exact same shape our rocket ships make when we blast off into space!

Some of your fellow Earthlings call this artwork 'Whale Bones.' Can you see why?



Added Learning



VOCABULARY:

Parabola: a U-shaped curve; the path of a thrown or launched object.

Trajectory: the path an object follows when forces push or pull it.

TRY THIS:

Toss a ball or beanbag. Trace its arc in the air with a finger. That arc is a parabola.

CROSS-CURRICULAR:

Connects sculpture to physics (projectile motion) and to natural forms (skeletal arcs in mammals).

Leaping into Space

Hare-O-Space, Final Leap (2023) - Josh Coté

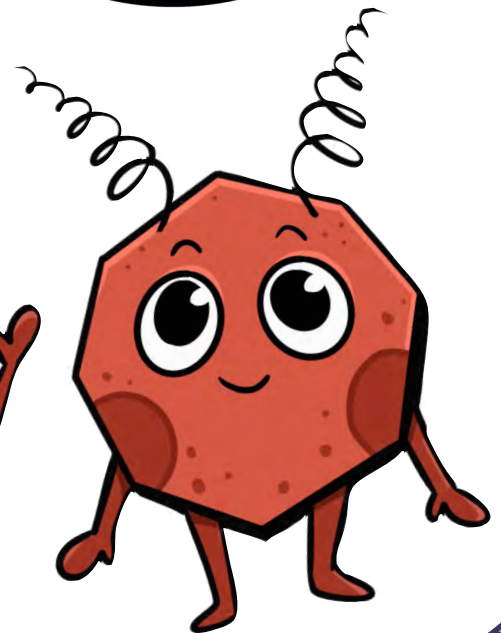
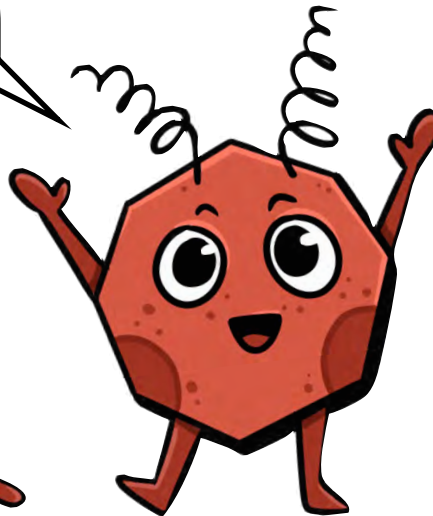


Big Spring Park near the Museum of Art.

The three of us were curious about the interesting shape that is around this rocket ship's 'launch pad.' Stop and count how many sides the shape on the ground has.

We thought those beings on the rocket ship were rabbits, but they're actually HARES! Rabbits and hares look similar but are different. Hares are much bigger, with longer ears and powerful legs built for leaping. Even the little hares are ready for launch!

This shape is called an OCTAGON. "Octa" is a Greek code word for a number. Can you guess what number "octa" stands for, based on your counting?



Added Learning



VOCABULARY:

Octagon: a flat shape with 8 sides.

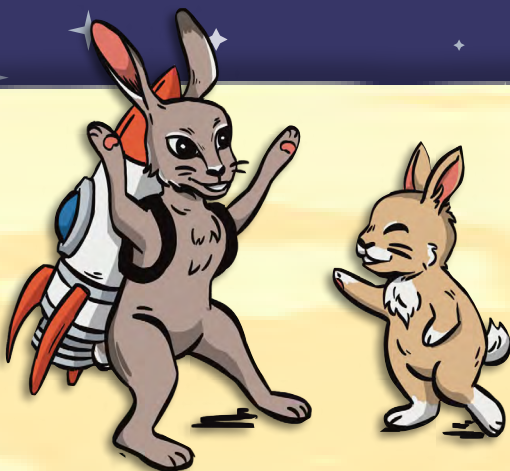
Hare vs. Rabbit: hares are larger, born furred and mobile; rabbits are born helpless.

TRY THIS:

Have students draw a polygon with the number of sides matching their age. Name it together.

GREEK PREFIXES (3-10):

Tri-, quad-, penta-, hexa-, hepta-, octa-, nona-, and deca-

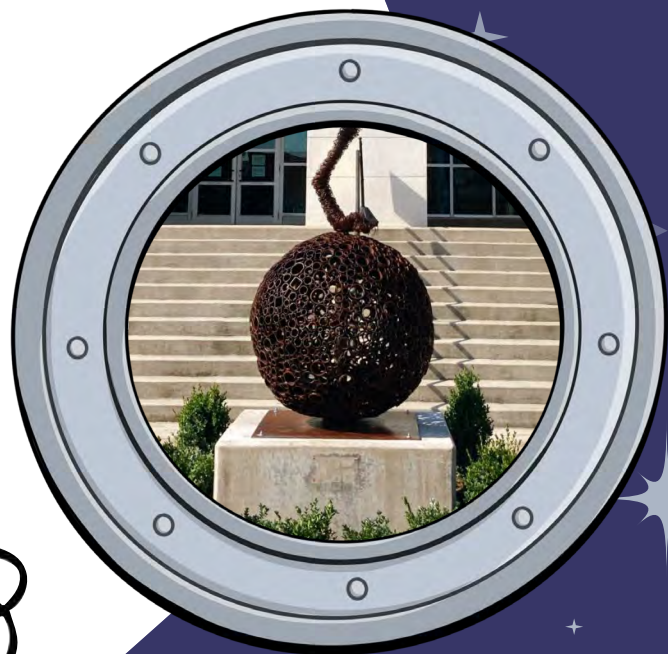


The Amazing Space GRACE!

Gracelyn Rose (2023) - Josh Coté



Entrance of the Huntsville Museum of Art.



Oh, look! It's another hare, but this one isn't launching into orbit. She was dancing on her tiptoes!

Her name is 'Gracelyn Rose.' She is posing in ARABESQUE, a beautiful Earth ballet position. I tried to copy the pose myself! You can also try this pose and have someone with you take a photo of you!

An octagon is flat and the ball under 'Gracelyn Rose' is round. What's the difference?



An octagon is like a drawing, flat. We call flat things SHAPES. A sphere is round and not flat, like a ball. We call things that are round and solid FORMS. Shapes and forms are super important in art!

Compare this sculpture and the other rocket sculpture you just saw. Do you think they were each made by a different artist, or do you think they were made by the same artist? How can you tell?

Added Learning



VOCABULARY:

Shape: flat 2-dimensional (circle, square, octagon).
Form: solid, 3-dimensional (sphere, cube, cone).

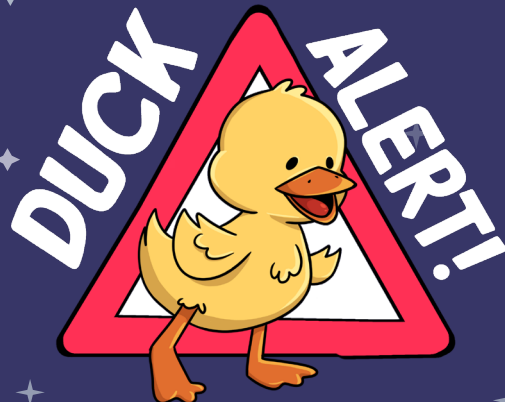
Arabesque: a ballet pose balanced on one leg, the other extended behind.

ARTIST CONNECTION:

Both *Hare-O-Space* and *Gracelyn Rose* are by Josh Coté. Students compare style, materials (found metal, wire), and subject (hares) to recognize an artist's signature.

TRY THIS:

Hold a paper circle vs. a ball. Which casts a shadow that stays a circle from every angle?

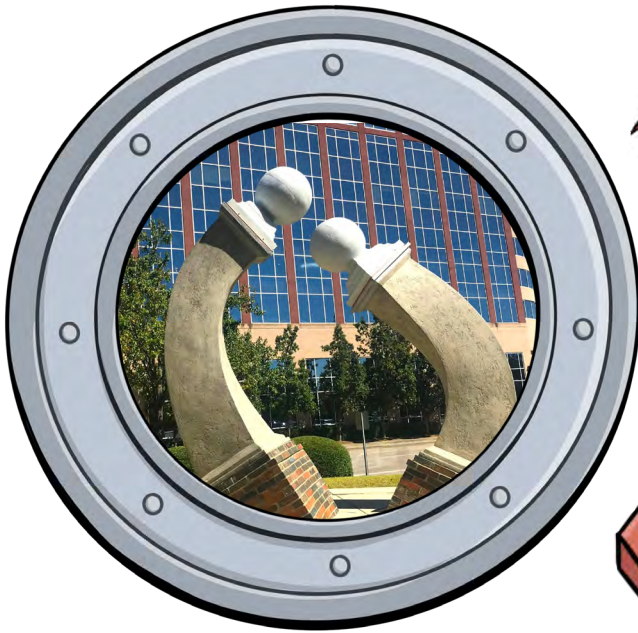


An Eclipse

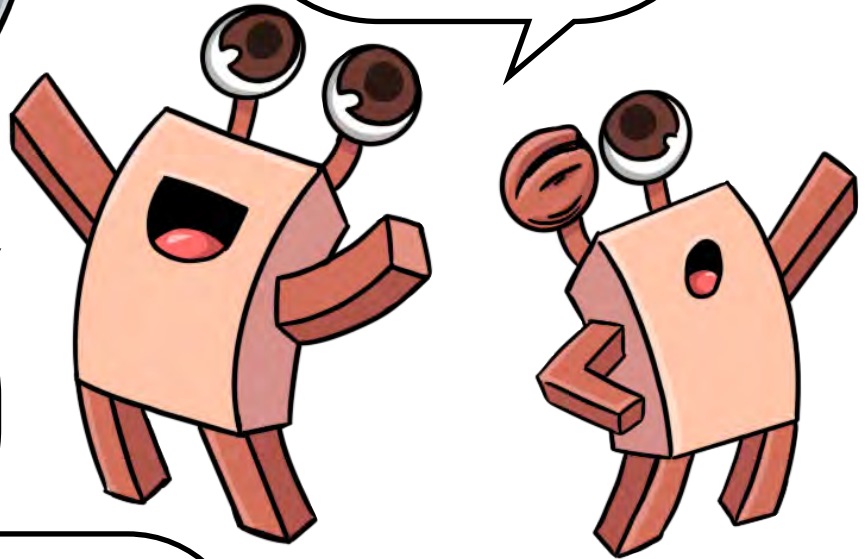
Eclipse (2023) - Glenn Dasher



Entrance to the Huntsville Museum of Art.



When we landed by this art piece, we couldn't help but try to copy the sculpture. It looked like it was about to tip right over!



This sculpture is called 'Eclipse.' The artist named it that because of how the two forms interacted with each other. In deep space, we see an eclipse happen when objects like the Earth and Moon align perfectly to block out light.

Look closely. Can you find a sphere? Can you find cuboids? CUBOIDS have 6 flat sides. A cube has all equal sides. A RECTANGULAR CUBOID is longer, like a brick.

The artist calls his sculptures "playful" and a little strange, like statues from history that never quite happened. Walk slowly around the sculpture. Does it look strong from one side, wobbly from another? That's PERSPECTIVE!

Added Learning



VOCABULARY:

Cuboid: a 3D form with 6 rectangular faces.
Eclipse: when one space object blocks another's light.

Perspective: how something looks based on where you stand.

TRY THIS:

Play with perspective by looking at the sculpture from an unusual angle. Draw or take a photo from your new perspective.

SCIENCE TIE-IN:

Solar vs. lunar eclipses; how shadows shift through the day with the sun's angle. An eclipse is only visible from a certain perspective.

Welcomes from Earth

The Little Lion of Big Spring Park (1900) - J.F. Hummel & Sons



Big Spring Park Waterfall.

A small stone figure is staring into the water. That is the Little Lion of Big Spring Park, the oldest public art in Downtown Huntsville!

The lion is over 100 years old. The Artonians can't believe an Earthling has seen so much history.

The sculpture is carved from **MARBLE**, a stone that comes from deep in the Earth. Marble is strong and tough. The little lion is strong enough to sit on. Want to take a picture on his back?

The little lion even survived being lost underwater for years! In 1990, crews found him submerged in the water. Nobody knows who put him there or how long he'd been there.



Added Learning



VOCABULARY:

Marble: a metamorphic rock formed from limestone under heat and pressure.

Public art: art placed where everyone can see and enjoy it, outside of museums.

HISTORY & MATH HOOKS:

c. 1900 = ask students to try mental math to tell you how long ago 1900 is. What was Huntsville like in 1900?

ANIMAL SCIENCE:

Is the lion male or female? How can you tell? (Hint: look for a mane.)



Postcard from Huntsville

[Welcome to Huntsville \(2016\) - Gracie Lennox](#)



*Across the street from
the waterfall.*

A giant postcard, painted right on a wall!

This mural uses bright colors and iconic **SYMBOLS**, which are pictures that stand for ideas, to tell you about the city of Huntsville. What symbols can you spot in the **mural**?

Artists use symbols to communicate big ideas without using words. If you were designing a postcard for your hometown, what symbols would you include?

When Artonians are visiting Huntsville and want to send a transmission home, they tag their photos with #hellohsv. Park your rocket ship here for a photo to show where your mission landed you! Strike your best explorer pose and imagine you're sending a postcard across the galaxy.



Added Learning



VOCABULARY:

Symbol: a picture or object that stands for an idea (a heart for love, a star for excellence).

Mural: a large painting made directly on a wall.

TRY THIS:

Ask each student to design a one-word postcard from their hometown using only symbols.

Huntsville's Hidden Space

Constant Surprises - Honeyblood (Jessie Andrews)



Pavilion ceiling at the top of the stairs past the waterfall.

Look up! A secret portal is hiding right above your head.

I couldn't help but smile. It looks just like my home galaxy, sparkling with swirling colors and shining stars.

This is a MURAL. But instead of being painted on a wall, it stretches across the ceiling! It's the perfect spot for us Artonians to rest in the shade while we study the stars.

If you look closely, you might notice golden stars tucked between the swirls. How many golden stars can you count?

Can you find the biggest one? What about the smallest? Take your time and see if you can discover every star hidden in this cosmic masterpiece!



Added Learning



VOCABULARY:

Mural: art applied directly to a permanent surface (wall OR ceiling).

SOLAR SYSTEM CHECK:

Our Solar System has 8 planets: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune. Mnemonic: My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nachos.





The Great Art Explore

[*Woman with Seven Birds* \(2019\) - Russell Whiting](#) (varies)

[*MC-24 Instrty* \(2024\) - Matt Miller](#) (varies)



Courthouse Square.

Courthouse Square is like a rotating outdoor gallery. The sculptures here are always changing, so there's often something new to discover each time you visit.

That's the magic of PUBLIC ART! Instead of being inside a museum, public art is created for everyone to enjoy in parks and other shared spaces.



As you explore Courthouse Square, walk around and count how many sculptures you can find. Do any of them remind you of something you've seen before? Which one is your favorite?

While you're searching, take notice of the street names around the square. Which one has the most interesting name?

Added Learning



VOCABULARY:

Public art: art made for shared, open public spaces.

Cardinal Directions: primary points of reference used for navigation and orientation: North, South, East, and West.

TRY THIS:

Identify each direction (East, West, North, South) as you walk around the Courthouse.

Take Me To Your Leaders

Watermarks (2024) - Shuli Sadé



Lobby of Huntsville City Hall.

When I stepped into the main lobby of City Hall, I encountered a massive wall of glowing glass. I stood there in absolute awe. To my alien eyes, it looked just like a digital map of Huntsville's collective memories!

This piece is called 'Watermarks' by Shuli Sadé, a stunning work of DIGITAL ART. The images were printed onto long glass panels and brightly lit from behind.



Look closely.
Can you find a park you've been to? A building you know?

You are in City Hall. City Hall isn't really a hall at all, it's a whole building where the Mayor and other city workers do their jobs.

The artist designed this artwork to represent the whole city. Does the art feel like a window? A map? A memory?



Added Learning



VOCABULARY:

City Hall: the primary administrative building of a municipal or local government.

Digital Artwork: any art practice that uses digital technology as an essential part of the creative or presentational process.

TRY THIS:

Can you recognize any buildings? Scan the QR code next to the artwork to find a list of Huntsville buildings the artist included in the art.



AquaLapis AquaLapis (2024) - Cliff Garten



Look up at the staircase on the right.

Floating overhead it looks like a blue and green nebula. It's a suspended sculpture. Steel cables hold it up against GRAVITY.

"AquaLapis" is Latin for water and stone. The blue crystals and silver metal are two SYMBOLS that stand for different things in the work. The blue crystals stand for Big Spring's flowing water. The metal shapes stand for the local mountains.



Lay of the Land

Lay of the Land (2024) - Ben Butler



Bottom of the City Hall staircase, near the security entrance.

It looks like a radar scan of Earth itself. This is a TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP. A map that shows how high and low the land is.

It pops out from the wall. The ridges show ELEVATION. The height of local mountains.

Added Learning



VOCABULARY:

Gravity: the force that pulls objects toward Earth.

Symbolism: using one thing to stand for another (curves = water, metal = mountains).

Topographical map: a map that shows elevation using lines or layers.

Elevation: how high a point is above sea level.

GEOGRAPHY TIE-IN:

Huntsville sits in the Tennessee Valley with Monte Sano and Green Mountain nearby. Find these mountains on a map.

Look at the entire 'Lay of the Land.' Where's the highest peak? Where's the deepest valley?



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MISSION COMPLETE!

Congratulations! You visited all the art on your Amazing Space Race journey!

With help from the Artonians, you learned all about public art and how it's made up of different shapes, forms, and colors.

Ready for your next mission?

Try the Lucky Duck Scavenger Hunt next. Search "Lucky Duck Scavenger Hunt" at Huntsville.org.

Grownups can also scan the QR code on the first page to reach the Public Art Archive. That's where all the information about the art you saw today lives.

For Educators, scan the QR code below for a link to the ALEX Standards used in this tour.

OVER AND OUT, SPACE RACERS!

ALEX Standards:

