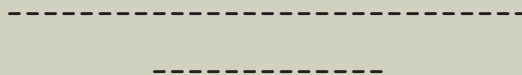


CREATIVE MIND



ACTIVITY BOOK
OF



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ICARUS, THE BOY WHO FLEW TOO CLOSE TO THE SUN

SUMMARY: Daedalus is punished by Minos for helping Ariadne and Theseus escape from the Minotaur's labyrinth. He is locked up together with his son Icarus in the place he has created. To escape, Daedalus invents wax wings for himself and his son, advising him not to fly too close to the sun. Icarus, however, pays no heed to his father's words.

ORIGINAL TITLE: ICARUS

ORIGIN: GREECE

KEYWORDS: FLIGHT, SUN, WINGS, WAX

GENRE: MYTH

AGE: 9–10 YEARS

ICARUS, THE BOY WHO FLEW TOO CLOSE TO THE SUN

In a distant past, bored gods observed the lives of men from above, rewarding and punishing their actions.

In the city of Athens lived a man named Daedalus.

He was a skilled inventor of great ingenuity, capable of finding solutions to even the most intricate of problems.

He was an architect and sculptor, and his fame was known throughout the world; it was said of him that he had even worked with the god Hermes and that he had been a pupil of the goddess Minerva.

His ingenuity, however, did not make him immune to envy towards his little nephew, who seemed to have inherited his own imagination and wonderful ability to invent things that could amaze. Every day, young Talus went to his uncle, proudly showing off an invention of his own.

Daedalus was amused at first, but as time went by, he became afraid that his nephew's fame would surpass his own and, so, blinded by envy, Daedalus committed a horrible crime: he pushed Talus off the highest cliff in Athens and into the sea.



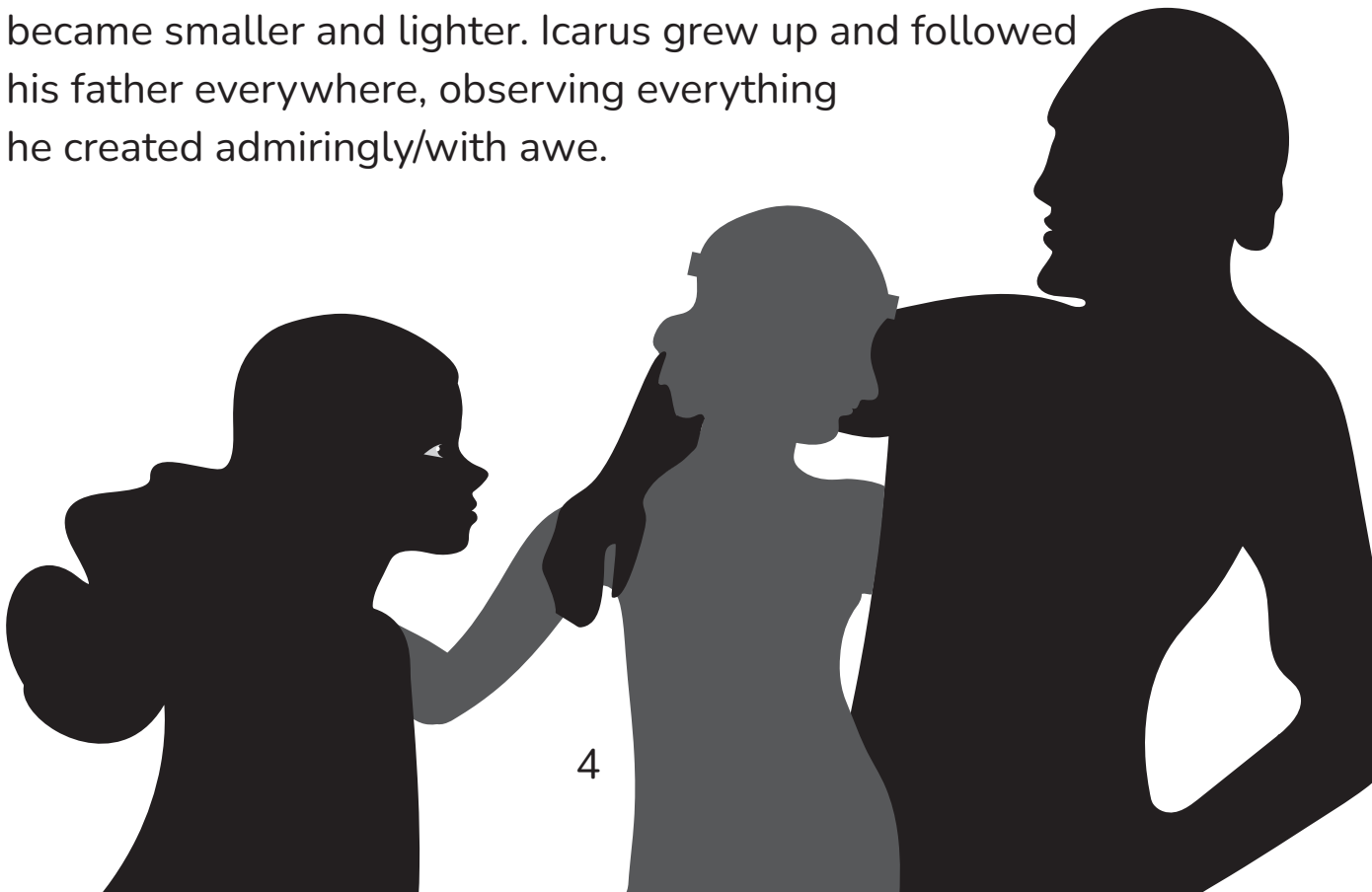
Because of his cruelty and violence, the inventor was condemned to leave Athens and exiled to the island of Crete.

Minos, the king of Crete, welcomed him with the highest honours because of his brilliant mind. Not a day went by that he did not ask the inventor to create something. Daedalus pleased the king, creating, inventing, and giving shape to his imagination.

But despite this, Daedalus felt the stain of his terrible crime grow wider and wider in his heart and longed to live a simpler and truer life. So, with time, he felt his heart open up to the king's daughter, little Ariadne.

Every day, Daedalus gifted her with a new game, an imaginative little invention that made her smile and amuse herself. The little girl's smile seemed to lighten the burden of his guilt.

His mastery as an inventor also won the heart of a woman named Naucrates. Daedalus asked her to marry him and after some time, their son Icarus was born. It finally seemed to Daedalus that the stain of what he had done became smaller and lighter. Icarus grew up and followed his father everywhere, observing everything he created admiringly/with awe.



One day, however, because of a slight Minos had committed towards the god of the seas Poseidon, his wife, Queen Pasiphae, bore a son with a bull's head and a human body.

Daedalus was then called upon to make a dark invention, the shadow of which thickened in his heart, widening the stain. The King, his face distraught with horror at this half-animal creature, ran to summon Daedalus:

“You must create a place to hide him, a place that can protect him from the sight of others and protect us from his cruelty!” cried Minos.

The inventor thought for a moment about where he himself would like to hide so that no one could see the darkness in his heart. The more he thought, the more it seemed to him that there was no way out, and every road led him back to that sad day in Talo.

“I will build a labyrinth,” Daedalus answered, “a place so intricate that no one will be able to get out.”



He drew all night and the next day carpenters and masons were ready to carry out his orders.

Stone by stone, the walls rose and fell, outlining rooms, creating narrow corridors and blind paths.

The labyrinth took shape, that of a huge and intricate web in which to get trapped, the shape of a snake coiled around itself, ready to eat men. A narrow and mysterious place, a tiring path that looked more and more like the life of Daedalus.

The half-human creature, the Minotaur, was imprisoned there and, for a while, its existence seemed to have been forgotten, as Daedalus returned to building harmless toys for little Ariadne and his son Icarus.

Icarus grew up happily, and, when he was not with his father, spent hours watching the sky. He laid down in the grass with his face to the sun so that it would kiss him and caress his hair.



Sometimes, when night would fall and the sky would be dotted with distant stars, Icarus would spell out their names and stretch out his arms to touch them. He would drink in the light that was caught between his eyelashes deep in his eyes like in a well. Time passed without Icarus noticing, only his father's voice calling his name awakened him from his enchanted dreams. Years passed and the time had come for the sports challenge games in Athens where king Minos wanted to send his son Androgeus to compete. He was such a talented and strong young man that he won all the games, arousing the wrath and envy of the Athenians, the which he paid with his life. Upon hearing the news, King Minos' heart filled with desire for vengeance. From that day on, he ordered that every year, fourteen children should be sent from Athens to be fed to the monster trapped in the labyrinth. Year after year, parents lost their children to the monster until one day, among those children came one named Theseus who would prevail in killing the monster. By that time, the king's daughter Ariadne had grown up and the terrible toll of her father's vengeance weighed heavy on her heart, so much so that she could no longer be cheered up by Daedalus' games. Perhaps that was why she helped young Theseus kill the Minotaur and set everyone free.

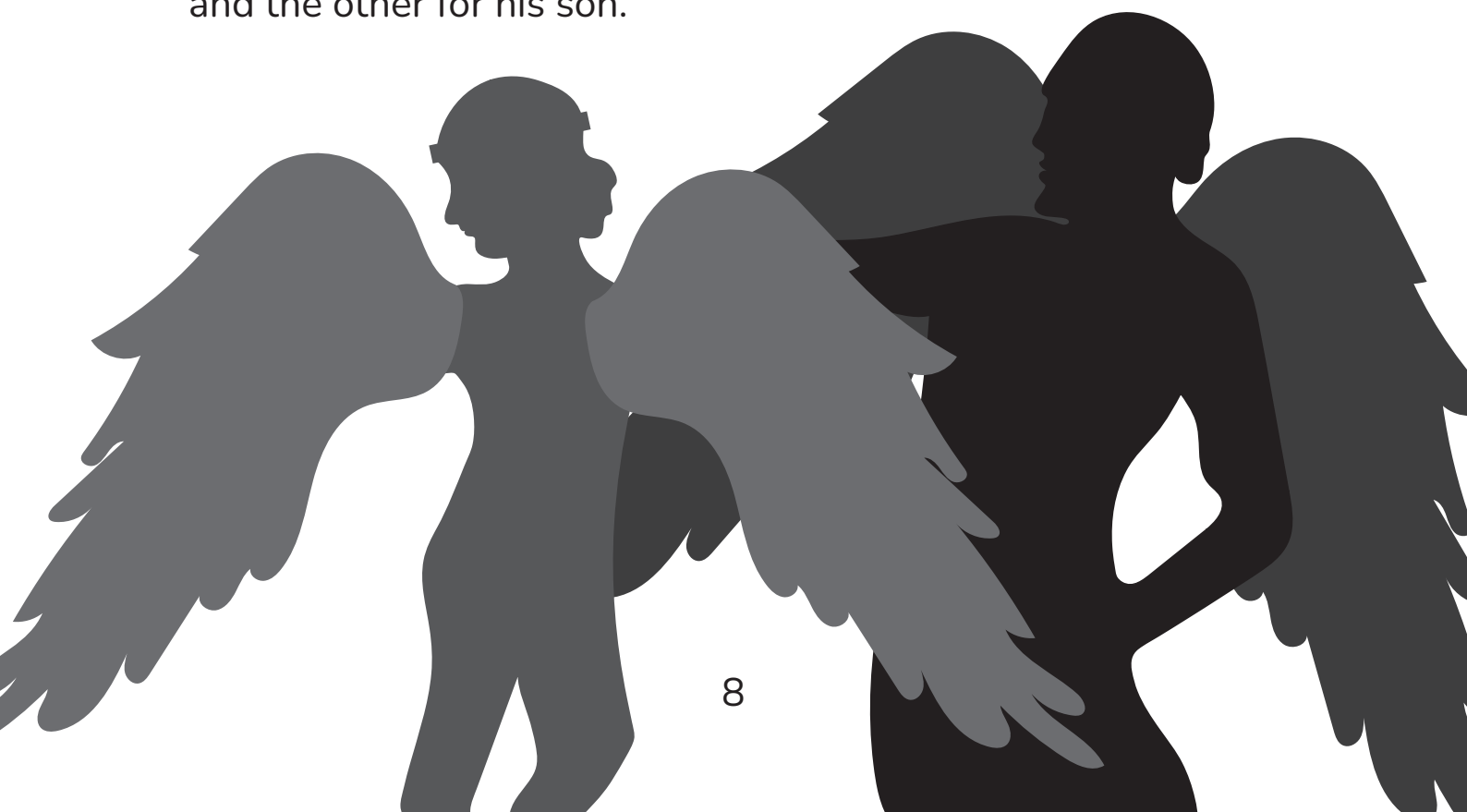
If only Minos had stopped to think, he would have realised that Theseus had freed everyone with this deed: not only the thirteen young men trapped in the labyrinth, but also both himself and Daedalus, as their sins had been wiped out forever along with the Minotaur. But once again, the king was overtaken by a blind rage: towards his daughter who had fled, towards Athens, the city that had made fun of him, and towards Theseus who had killed the Minotaur.

For all of this, he blamed Daedalus.

The king called the guards: "Take Daedalus and his son Icarus and throw them into the labyrinth!"

Minos thought he had imprisoned them forever, forgetting that Daedalus was, first and foremost, an inventor and that nothing and no one could stop imagination.

His imagination was overdrive and Daedalus indeed thought he could fly. He gathered feathers of all kinds, intertwined them with each other and sealed them with wax, taking care to arrange them from largest to smallest, thus creating two splendid pairs of wings one for himself and the other for his son.



While his father worked, Icarus watched him attentively and full of wonder. He gazed enchantedly at his hands, trying to follow his thoughts and the wondrous project he was carrying out. When the creation of the wings was completed, Icarus could not refrain from expressing an “Oooh!” of total amazement.

The wings were perfect, just like those of birds.

Daedalus, however, while weaving one feather over the other, had begun to worry about his son.

He told him: “Icarus, these wings may save us from this labyrinth, but it is important that you do exactly as I say! You must not fly too low, for you would lose the current, but you must not fly too high, for the sun would melt the wax!”



“I understand father,” Icarus replied, nodding, but without giving much thought to the words, as he was already imagining himself breaking free from the constraints of the labyrinth.

Daedalus and Icarus ascended high and then, with a great leap, they launched themselves into the emptiness.

The act of flying brought about such unexpected and intense emotions that go beyond imagination. As they rose up into the sky, the wind supported them and gently pushed them along.

Icarus felt clumsy at first and followed his father’s more experienced gestures closely. But then, becoming more confident, he began to pirouette, soaring high and swooping down as he had seen hawks do, and flying in wide, playful circles in the manner of swallows.

Icarus felt powerful and happy, thinking that the wind and his body were one and the same and that he could master them just as birds can.

The sun flashed in the midst of the clear blue sky on such a perfect day, and the chirping of the cicadas below him became more muffled and distant.





Icarus danced in the air, forgetting he was a simple boy, and he began to ascend higher and higher. Daedalus, frightened, called him back, but by now Icarus was too far away for him to hear or even see him, as the blinding light of the sun had tinted the sky a cruel and intense red.

Like long tongues, the sun's fiery rays licked and lapped at Icarus' wings as he ascended higher and higher.

The air gradually became warmer and warmer, so that the wax began to soften and the first feathers came off, sliding gently away.

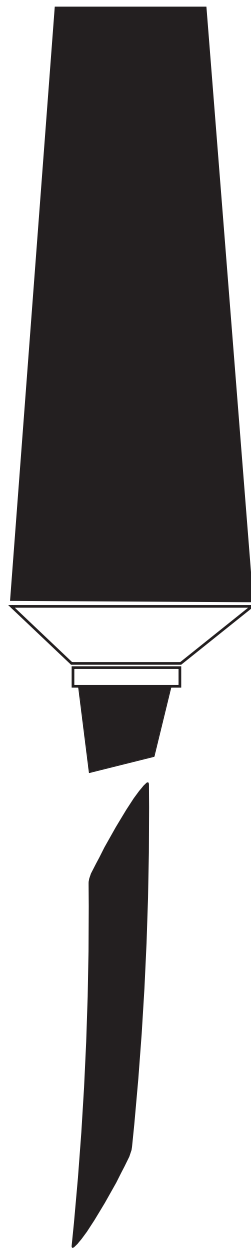
The wax became liquid and fragile, and in an instant, dissolved, as the wings began to flake. Icarus plummeted into the emptiness, his arms flailing uselessly, trying to hold on to the air, to cling to the clouds... Icarus slipped towards the sea, closing his eyes as he fell, as if to take a bit of that sky with him.

Daedalus' brilliant mind was helpless to invent anything to stop the tragedy. He could only watch from afar as his son was swallowed up by the sea, just as little Talus had been so many years before.

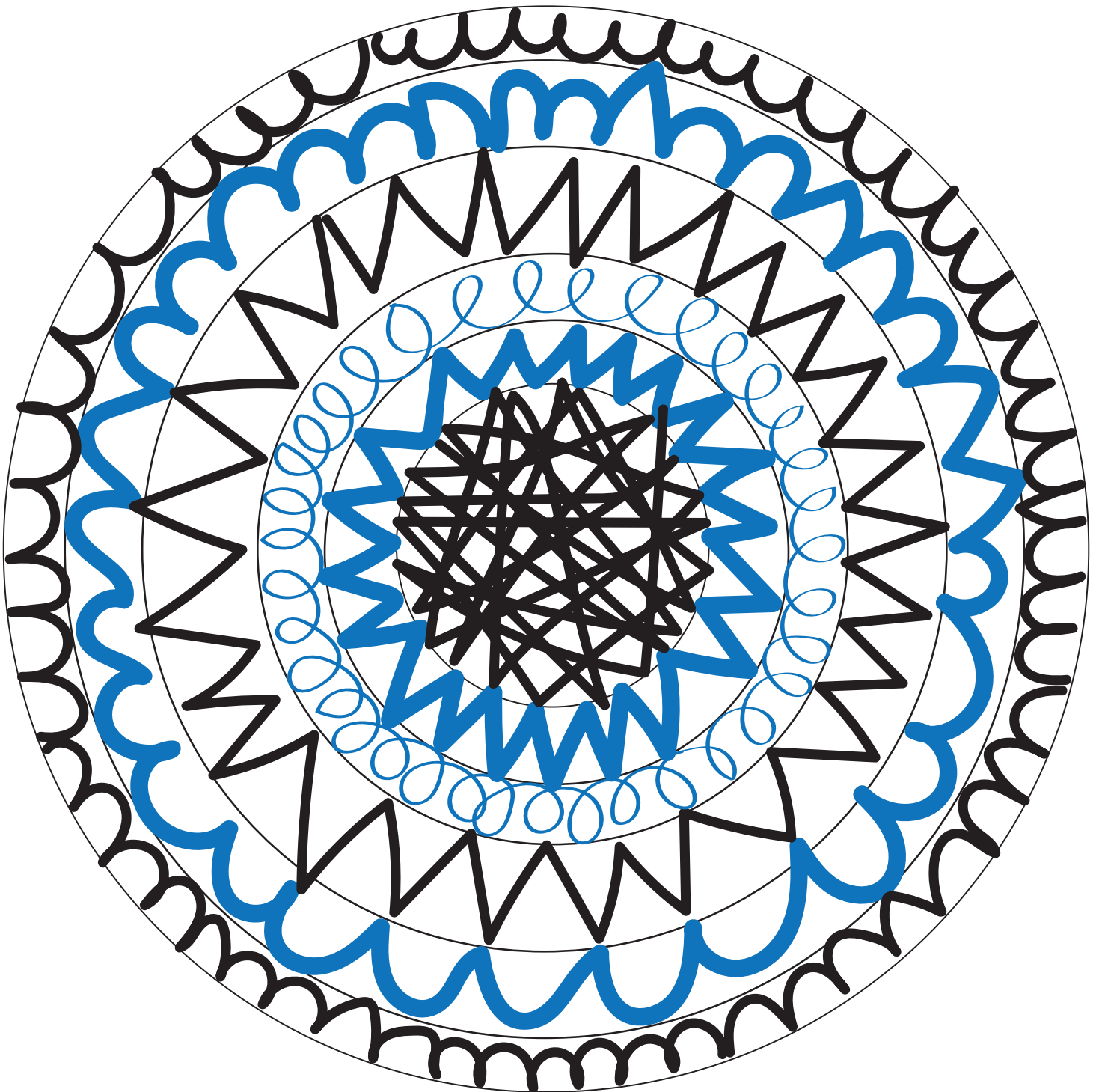


ACTIVITIES

The tools we draw with are important.
Get markers with different tips:
flat, round, brush. Also get some brushes
and tempera paints.
You can choose black or any other colour
you like.



Use the drawing provided that is made up of concentric circles.
Draw a different continuous line inside each circle.
Try to do so without removing your hand from the paper.



Use the key word or another word chosen with the teacher.
Now do the same with the letters: use each circle to write
a letter and write it consecutively. Alternate different tools
and colors.

Icarus



Try to write the sentence “Icarus flew too close to the sun” inside a spiral.
Draw it with a pencil so you can erase it after you write.
Write the sentence on the line you drew.
To do this, turn your sketchbook paper over.
Do this starting from the outside inward.



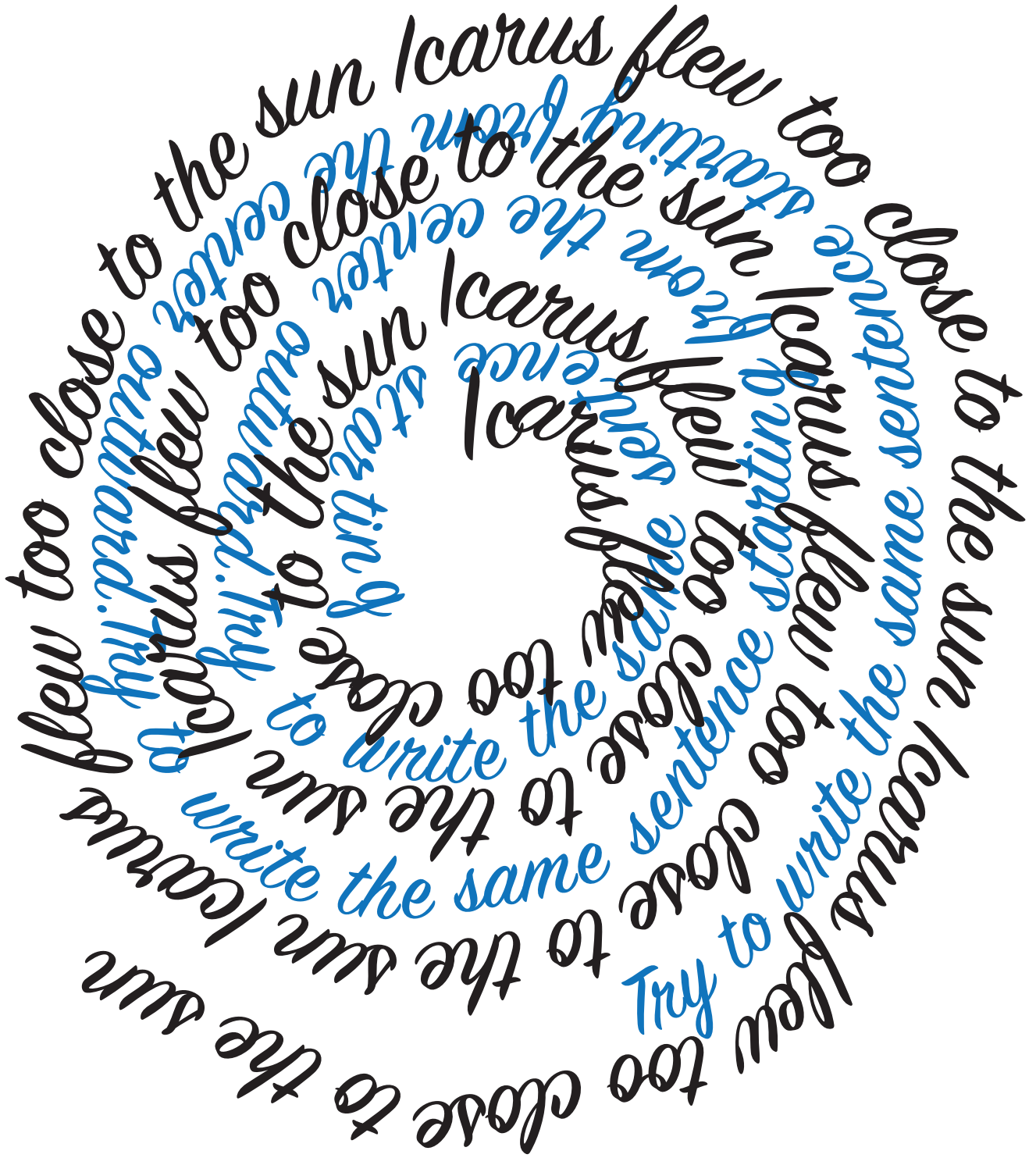
The image shows a blue spiral drawn on a page. Inside the spiral, the sentence "Icarus flew too close to the sun" is written in a cursive script. The text is arranged in a circular pattern, following the curve of the spiral. The words are: "Icarus", "flew", "too", "close", "to", "the", "sun". The spiral starts from the outside and winds inward.

Try to write the same sentence starting from the center outward.

sun leaves flew too close to the sun leaves flew too close to the sun
leaves flew too close to the sun leaves flew too close to the sun
leaves flew too close to the sun leaves flew too close to the sun
leaves flew too close to the sun leaves flew too close to the sun
leaves flew too close to the sun leaves flew too close to the sun

Draw a spiral and write the sentence with black colour.

In the blank space write the same sentence with another colour!





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