

**“Live... from McDonald Observatory!”  
Videoconference  
“Observing Venus: Explore how it changes”  
Student activity sheet**



**McDonald Observatory**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

In late 1610 Galileo Galilei, an Italian scientist, became the first person to observe Venus through a telescope. Using his small, hand-made telescope he made a great scientific discovery about our solar system. Today, you will observe Venus and make that discovery for yourself.

**Telescope Investigation: make your own sketch of planet Venus**

Look closely at the image on your screen, and draw what you see from the telescope.

Describe your observation of Venus. Did you find anything interesting?

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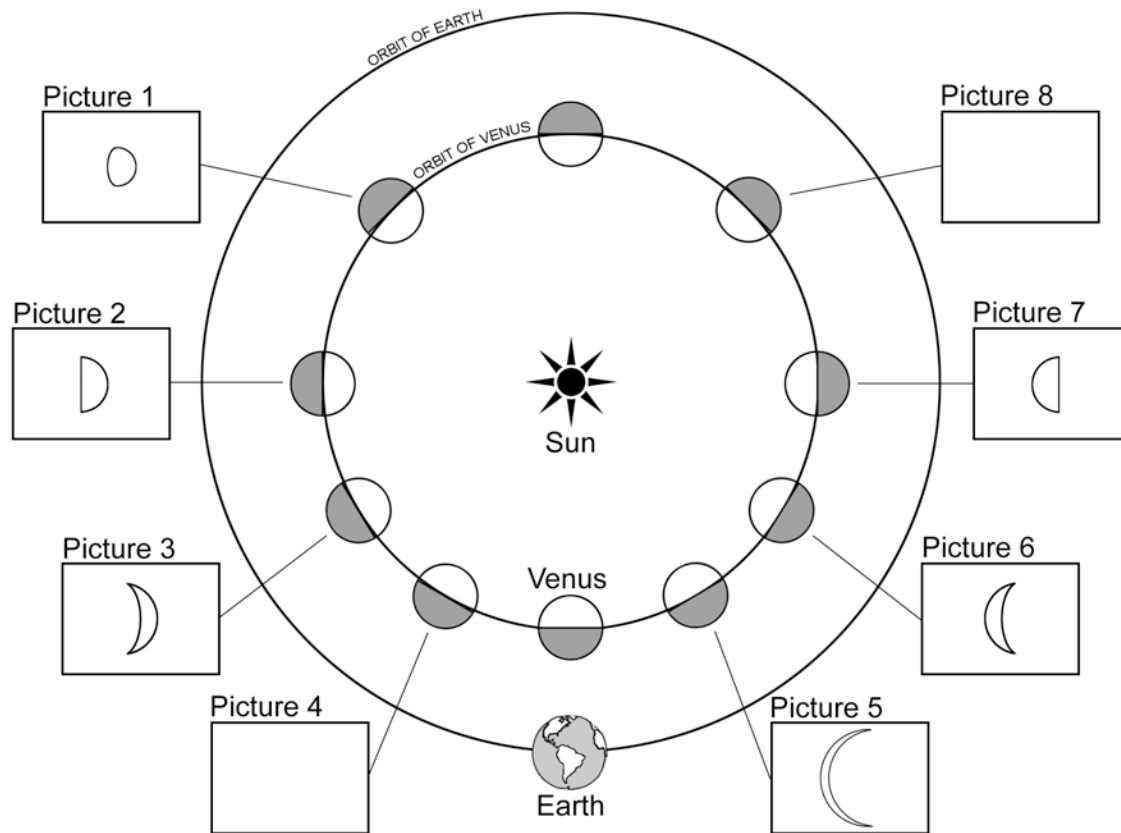
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Below is a diagram showing the orbital path of Venus and the Earth. Pictures 1-8 show what Venus would look like at different places along its orbit, but pictures #4 and #8 are missing. Can you draw what Venus would look like in pictures #4 and #8?



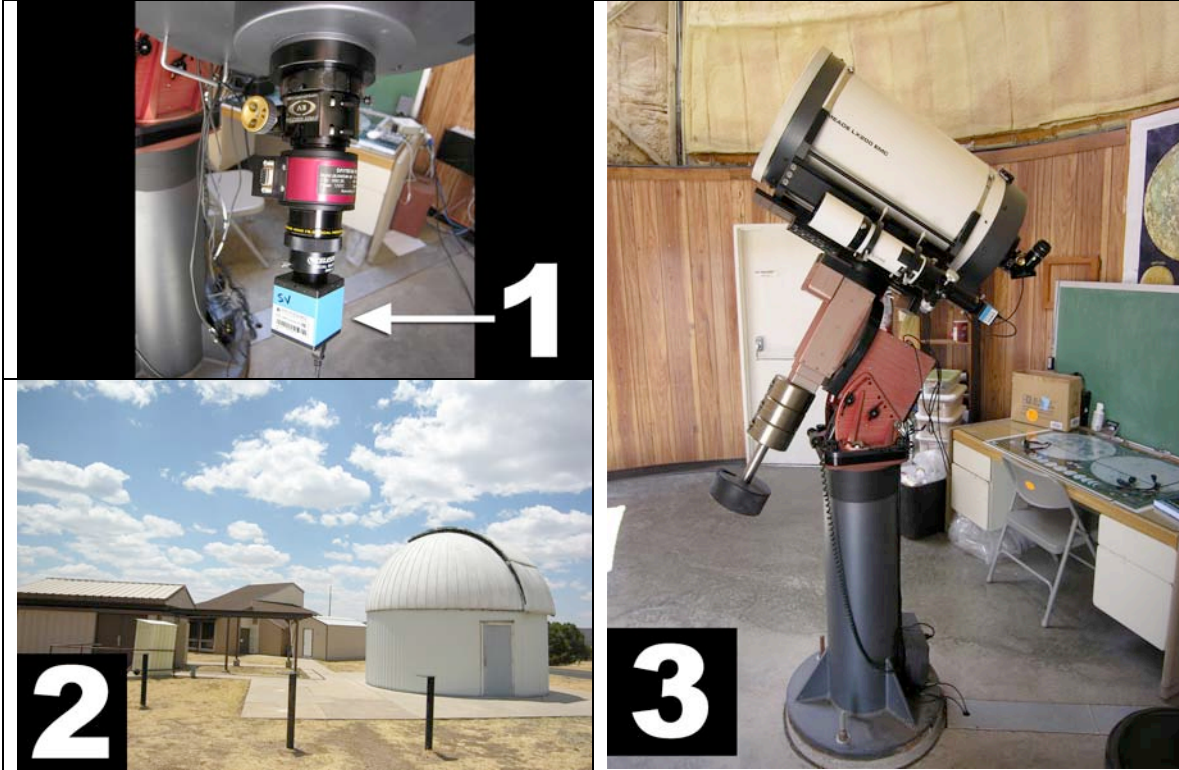
Notice the phase of Venus in the drawing you made earlier. Using the above diagram of the orbit of Venus, determine where Venus is currently located in its orbit. Which picture (1-8) is the closest representation of the phase of Venus as seen today?

Picture # \_\_\_\_\_ represents the phase and orbital position of Venus as seen today.

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- 1: The digital videocamera takes electronic images of Venus.  
2: The dome protects and houses the telescope and equipment.  
3: Inside the dome is this 16-inch (40.6 cm) telescope that you will use during the videoconference.

**Equipment and hardware used in Venus observations:**

- Telescope:** One 80-mm (3-inch) Explore Scientific refractor.  
One Meade 40.6 cm (16-inch) reflector
- Cameras:** Two Imaging Source high-resolution grayscale cameras
- Mounting:** Software Bisque ME Robotic Paramount  
(Telescopes and cameras are remote operated from videoconference studio)
- Computer:** Apple Mac-mini (Intel)