Fireflies are a type of beetle that have a luminescent abdomen. There are 15 different species of fireflies in New England! During the day, you can recognize these harmless beetles by their narrow black bodies and red-orange heads. At night, they combine a chemical (luciferin) with oxygen inside their body to create a bright glow. You are most likely to see fireflies on warm, humid nights in the summer when they are flashing signals to potential mates. Large gatherings of fireflies can create spectacular light shows over open fields at night. Sometimes people catch fireflies in jars to watch them glow. Instead of capturing these insects, create a glowing jar lantern inspired by these amazing critters.

SUPPLIES
- Dark paper
- Glass jar
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Tape
- Corrugated cardboard
- Flashlight, candle or electric candle

INSTRUCTIONS
Step 1: Gather a sheet of paper big enough to wrap around the outside of your jar or tape two pieces of paper together, if needed.

Step 2: Lay your jar on top of the paper and mark the height you will need to cover the sides. Cut the paper.

Step 3: Check that your paper will wrap neatly around your jar, but do not attach it yet. Trim or add paper as needed before moving on to the next step.

Step 4: Lay your paper on top of the cardboard and poke some holes in it with a pencil. Holes can be random or in a pattern. Poke holes over the entire sheet, being careful not to weaken the paper too much.

Step 5: Wrap your hole-punched sheet around the jar and tape in place. In a dark room or at night outside, light the jar up from inside to cast fireflies across the walls or on the ground! If you are using a flashlight or an electric candle you can turn and move the jar to change the shape and movement of the “fireflies.” If using a flame candle, remember to ask an adult for help and take care to not touch the top of the jar once lit, as it may be very hot.

To watch this process visit youtube.com/PeabodyEssexMuseum

SHOW US!
We want to see your firefly lanterns. Share your photos online using #PEMpod or #peabodyessex