SCIENCE

The solar system

Name _____ Date _____

I can name the eight planets in order from the sun.

1 How it works

Our solar system is the sun and everything that travels around it. Eight planets orbit the sun: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. The first four are small and rocky. The last four are giant planets made mostly of gas and ice. Earth is the only planet we know of with life.



8 planets travel around the sun

2 Label the planets in order

Use the names in the box.

Venus	Neptune	Saturn	Earth
Uranus	Mercury	Jupiter	Mars

1 _____



2 _____



3 _____



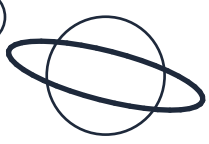
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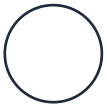
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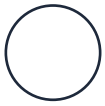
6 _____



7 _____



8 _____



How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

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Planet facts

Name _____ Date _____

I can match planets to their facts.

1 Draw a line from each planet to its fact

Mercury	closest to the sun
Earth	has water and life
Mars	has big, bright rings
Jupiter	the red planet
Saturn	the biggest planet

2 Rocky planet or gas giant? Circle it.

Mars	rocky	gas giant
Jupiter	rocky	gas giant
Venus	rocky	gas giant
Neptune	rocky	gas giant

How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

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Think like a scientist

Name _____ Date _____

I can describe the planets of our solar system.

1 Think about it

1. What is at the center of the solar system? _____
2. Which planet do we live on? _____
3. Why is Mars called the red planet? _____
4. Which planets are rocky? _____

2 True or false? Circle it.

1. Mars is called the red planet.	true	false
2. Earth is the third planet from the sun.	true	false
3. There are eight planets.	true	false
4. Jupiter is the smallest planet.	true	false
5. The sun travels around Earth.	true	false

3 Design a rocket to visit a planet. Label its parts.

How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

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Try it: walk the solar system

Name _____ Date _____

I can build a model of the distances in space.

1 You need

- a long hallway or a yard
- 9 paper signs
- a marker
- big steps
- a partner

2 What to do

1. Write SUN and the 8 planet names on the signs. Put the SUN sign at one end.
2. Take big steps from the sun and drop each sign: Mercury at 1 step, Venus at 2, Earth at 3, Mars at 5.
3. Keep going: Jupiter at 14 steps, Saturn at 25, Uranus at 47 and Neptune at 72.
4. Look back at the sun. Which planets are close together? Which are far apart?

3 I predict

Which planet will be farthest away?

_____

_____

4 What I see

Planet	Steps from the sun	Close or far?
Earth		
Jupiter		
Neptune		

How did I do? ☆ ☆ ☆

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FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Answer key: the solar system

1 Page 1

Planets in order: 1) Mercury; 2) Venus; 3) Earth; 4) Mars; 5) Jupiter; 6) Saturn; 7) Uranus; 8) Neptune.

2 Page 2

Facts: 1) Mercury: closest to the sun; 2) Earth: has water and life; 3) Mars: the red planet; 4) Jupiter: the biggest planet; 5) Saturn: has big, bright rings.

Type: 1) Mars: rocky; 2) Jupiter: gas giant; 3) Venus: rocky; 4) Neptune: gas giant.

3 Page 3

Think: 1) The sun; 2) Earth; 3) Its ground is covered in red, rusty dust; 4) Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars.

True or false: 1) true; 2) true; 3) true; 4) false; 5) false.

Drawing: answers will vary. Look for a named planet and labeled rocket parts.

4 Page 4: Try it!

The four rocky planets bunch up close to the sun: Earth is only 3 steps away. Jupiter is 14 steps away and Neptune is about 72 steps away. The planets are tiny and far apart, and most of the solar system is empty space.

5 Teaching tip

Teach the order with the sentence My Very Eager Mother Just Served Us Nachos, then let children invent their own sentence with the same eight first letters.

Safety: do the walk with a grown-up, in a safe, open place away from roads.

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