Exploring Our Solar System

Name: _____ Date: _____



Our solar system is made up of the sun and everything that travels around it: eight planets, many moons, and chunks of rock and ice called asteroids and comets.

The four planets closest to the sun are Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars. They are called rocky planets because they have hard surfaces. Mercury is the smallest planet. Venus is the hottest, because its thick air traps heat like a blanket. Mars looks red because its soil contains rusty iron dust.

The four outer planets are Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. These giants are made mostly of gas and ice, so you could never stand on them. Jupiter is the largest planet. More than 1,000 Earths could fit inside it! Saturn is famous for its bright rings, which are made of pieces of ice and rock.

Earth is the only planet where we know life exists. It has liquid water, air to breathe, and just the right temperature for plants, animals and people.

1 WHICH? **Which planet is the largest?**

Mercury Jupiter Mars

2 WHY? **Why is Venus the hottest planet?**

It has rings. Its thick air traps heat.

3 **Read each sentence. Circle True or False.**

Saturn's rings are made of ice and rock.	True	False
You could stand on Neptune.	True	False
Mars looks red because of rusty dust.	True	False

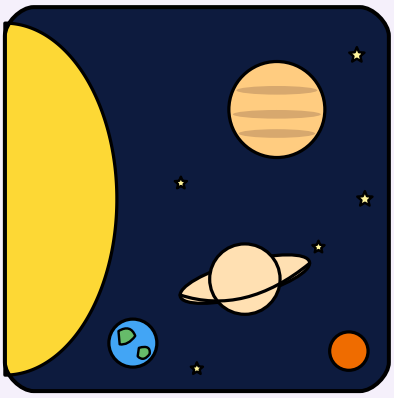
4 WHAT? **What makes Earth special? Give two details.**

_____

_____

Exploring Our Solar System

Answer Key



Our solar system is made up of the sun and everything that travels around it: eight planets, many moons, and chunks of rock and ice called asteroids and comets.

The four planets closest to the sun are Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars. They are called rocky planets because they have hard surfaces. Mercury is the smallest planet. Venus is the hottest, because its thick air traps heat like a blanket. Mars looks red because its soil contains rusty iron dust.

The four outer planets are Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. These giants are made mostly of gas and ice, so you could never stand on them. Jupiter is the largest planet. More than 1,000 Earths could fit inside it! Saturn is famous for its bright rings, which are made of pieces of ice and rock.

Earth is the only planet where we know life exists. It has liquid water, air to breathe, and just the right temperature for plants, animals and people.

1 WHICH? **Which planet is the largest?**

Mercury **Jupiter** Mars

2 WHY? **Why is Venus the hottest planet?**

It has rings. **Its thick air traps heat.**

3 **Read each sentence. Circle True or False.**

Saturn's rings are made of ice and rock.	**True**	False
You could stand on Neptune.	True	**False**
Mars looks red because of rusty dust.	**True**	False

4 WHAT? **What makes Earth special? Give two details.**

It is the only planet we know has life. It has liquid water and air.