

Our Solar System

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to become more familiar with our solar system, considering planets and moons, stars, and other celestial bodies. While gaining greater general knowledge about space and our solar system, language skills will be reinforced through these activities, which focus on vocabulary and spelling. Logic/decoding skills are also reinforced, as well as skills used in creative arts. (The activities are geared towards verbal, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial learners.)

Students will be able to

1. Recall the planets in our solar system, and recognize them relative to one another (i.e. in terms of size, position, etc.).
2. Note some significant features of the planets in our solar system.
3. Define terms related to space and the solar system.

Important Vocabulary (key terms in bold)

Mars	Earth	Pluto	Jupiter	Uranus
Mercury	Venus	Saturn	moon	star
asteroid	meteor	comet	galaxy	universe
constellation	space	solar system	planet	astronaut
Sun				

Planet Scramble I and II (spelling, vocabulary, science)

Students unscramble the names of the planets, and complete a diagram of the solar system.

*(** See below for printable activity.)*

Space Lingo (spelling, vocabulary, science)

Students define a list of words using a dictionary or textbook.

*(** See below for printable activity.)*

The Mysterious Beyond in 3-D (art, science)

Students model our solar system, individually or in small groups. This project requires access to images of the planets (as points of reference), as well as modeling materials, to include 'salt dough' or paper mache (applied over round balloons in varying sizes) and paints. Of course, styrofoam spheres in varying sizes could also be used. This activity can be completed in small groups, or individually as time permits.

Solar System Mural: Collage (art, science)

As a class, students create a large collaged mural of our solar system, complete with stars, comets, etc. Materials needed include a large length of paper, preferably black or dark blue, glue/paste—spray adhesive could be used by an adult, or by students under direct, strict supervision—and large scraps in varying colors and textures. Scraps could include paper, wallpaper, wrapping paper, fabric, carpet, packing materials (e.g. bubble wrap, corrugated cardboard...), etc.