

## Solar System

**Note:** Students will need reference materials: encyclopedias, books, or magazines on the solar system or individual planets, and access to the Internet. You're going to work together in groups. Each group will have a leader. You'll look up information, and you'll write about the things you find out.

**Remember the rules for group members.**

**Rule 1: Listen to what others say.**

Say that rule. (Signal.) Listen to what others say.

**Rule 2: Don't interrupt somebody who is talking.**

Say that rule. (Signal.) Don't interrupt somebody who is talking.

**3: Raise your hand if you want to say something.**

Say that rule. (Signal.) Raise your hand if you want to say something.

**4: Ask questions about anything you don't understand.**

Say that rule. (Signal.) Ask questions about anything you don't understand.

Mercury



Venus



Earth



Mars



You're going to make wall displays about the planets in our solar system. The displays will show facts you learn, pictures you find, and pictures you draw. These are the first four planets we will study: **Mercury**, **Venus**, **Earth**, and **Mars**.

**Read the names.**

**Planet 1.** (Signal.) **Mercury**.

**Planet 2.** (Signal.) **Venus**.

**Planet 3.** (Signal.) **Earth**.

**Planet 4.** (Signal.) **Mars**.

(Repeat step a until firm.)

**Each group will find information about a different planet:**

**Group 1** will find pictures and information about **Mercury**.

**Group 2** will research **Venus**.

**Group 3** will research **Earth**.

**Group 4** will research **Mars**.

(Assign students to four groups with 5 to 7 students in each group. Assign the group leader and where each group is located in the classroom.)

**Group 1** raise your hands.

You will research Mercury. What planet? (Signal.) **Mercury**.

**Group 2** raise your hands.

You will research Venus. What planet? (Signal.) **Venus**.

**Group 3** raise your hands.

You will research Earth. What planet? (Signal.) **Earth**.

**Group 4** raise your hands.

You will research Mars. What planet? (Signal.) **Mars**.

Group leaders, raise your hands.

Your job is to help the group find information to write about your planet. If students in your group have questions, they will ask you for help. You can use a dictionary to find the meaning of any word you don't know.

The outline shows how you'll record the information on lined paper. – Read the heading for note A.



Note A: Size:

Note B: Hours of the day:

Note C: Time to circle the sun:



Note D: Distance from the sun:

Note E: Moons:

Note F: Other interesting information:



If your group is researching Mars, you will find information for all the notes. You'll find out the size of Mars. You'll find out if Mars is bigger or smaller than Earth. You'll find out how many hours are in a day on Mars, and how many days it takes Mars to circle the sun. You'll also find out how far from the sun Mars is and information about the moons Mars has. Then you'll record any other interesting facts you find about Mars.

Raise your hand if **Mars** is your planet.

Hands down.

Raise your hand if **Earth** is your planet.

Hands down.

Raise your hand if **Venus** is your planet.

Hands down.

Raise your hand if **Mercury** is your planet.

Hands down.

Pairs of students will work together. *(Assign pairs of students within each group.)*

Each pair will find all the information in the outline and one partner will write it down. Raise your hand when you've decided who will do the writing for your pair.

At the top of your lined paper, write your name, your partner's name, your planet number, and name of the planet your group is researching.

Pencils down when you've done that much.

You can find the information about your planet in books, magazines, or on the Internet. You can also use a dictionary to look up any word you don't know.

If you use the Internet, start your search with the planet name and the words that tell what you are researching. If you are researching the hours in a day for **Venus**, you type the planet name and the words hours in a day.

If you are researching how many moons **Mercury** has, you type the planet name and the word moons.

If you are researching how far from the sun the **Earth** is, you type the planet name and the words distance from the sun.

**What's the planet name?** (Signal.) **Earth.**

**What words do you type after the planet name?** (Signal.)

**Distance from the sun.**

If you are researching the size of Mars, what's the planet name? (Signal.) **Mars.**

What word do you type after the planet name? (Signal.) **Size.**

(Repeat step b until firm.)

Remember to write complete sentences and spell words correctly. Leaders can work with any pair that needs help. Leaders, if you can't solve a problem or answer a question, raise your hand and I'll help you.

We'll try to work on the project every day until we complete it. Groups will work on their assignment 20 to 30 minutes a day. Start now.

*(Observe groups and give feedback.)*

*(After about 15 minutes, say:) You have about 5 minutes to finish what you are writing today.*

*(After about 5 minutes, say:) Stop working. Leaders, collect the papers from your group and bring them to me.*

Make sure the names of the students, the planet, and the notes are written on each paper. I'll pass the papers back at the beginning of our next language period.

*(Collect papers. Examine the papers before the next period. Note good aspects of what each group wrote and what they need to change or clarify.)*