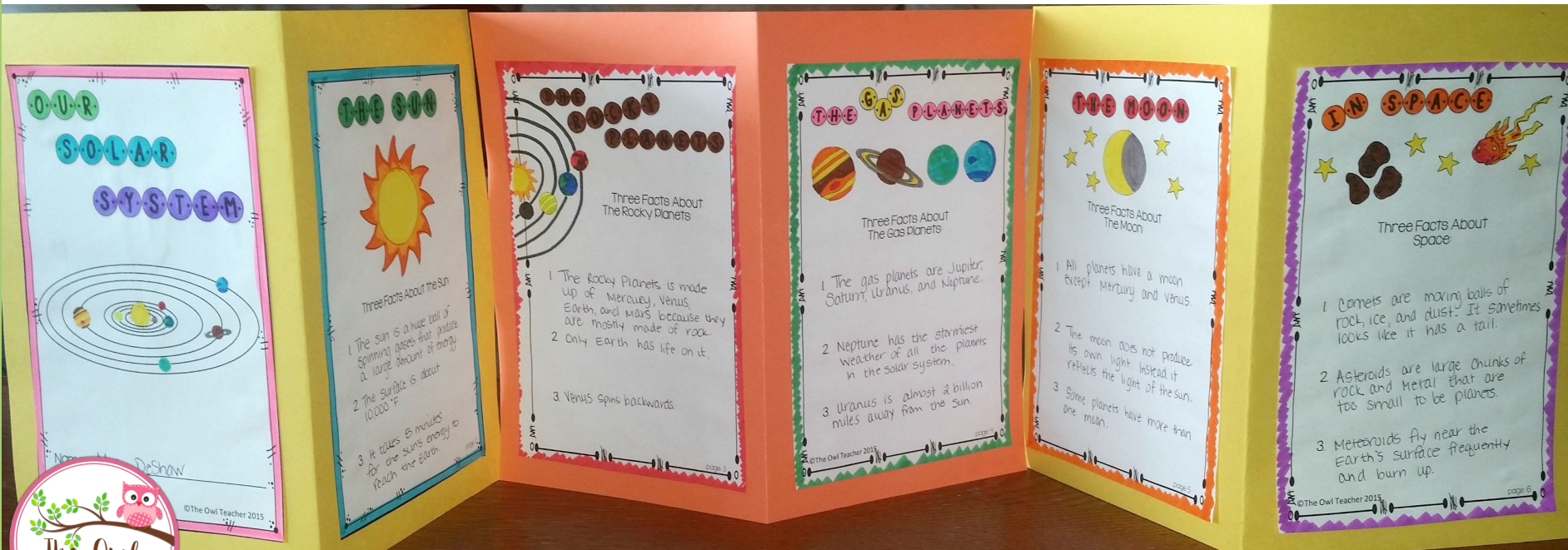


Accordion Book

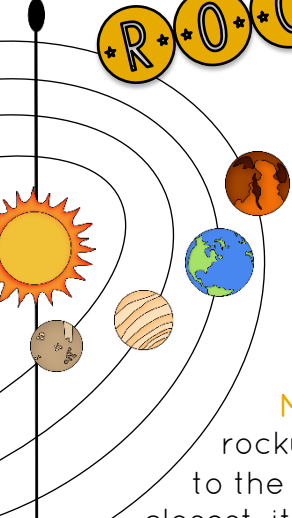
Solar System

Reading Passages Included



Created By: The Owl Teacher

THE ROCKY PLANETS



The first four planets of the solar system are known as the rocky planets because – you guessed it – they are made up of mostly rock!

Mercury is the first of the rocky planets because it is closest to the sun. Since this planet is the closest, it completes its orbit around the sun in only 88 Earth days.

Venus is the second planet closest to the sun and is the brightest of the planets. It rotates backward and is about the size of the Earth.

Our planet, **Earth**, is the third in line around the sun and is the only planet that life has been found on. Since the Earth is tilted on an axis, movement around the sun causes seasons in many parts of our world.

The fourth rocky planet is known as the red planet because of its red cliffs and orange sky. **Mars** has enormous volcanoes.

IN SPACE



Planets are not the only things that orbit the sun. **Comets** are moving balls of rock, ice, and dust. As comets get closer to the sun, the ice melts and turns into gas. This gas forms a long tail that carries pieces of the dust and rock. It can be millions of miles long.

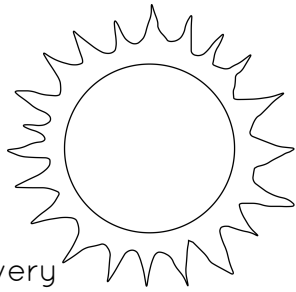
Asteroids are large chunks of rock and metal that are found in space. There are thousands of them in a belt being found between Mars and Jupiter. These asteroids are too small to be called planets.

When chunks of rock and metal found in space are smaller than an asteroid, it is called a **meteoroid**. Most meteoroids that get too close to the Earth burn up in its atmosphere. As it burns up, it creates a streak of light across the sky that looks like a shooting star. When they do hit the Earth's surface it is then called a meteorite. Sometimes they will fall in groups and create a meteor shower.

Anytime a **meteor** does hit the Earth's surface, it leaves a huge hole called a crater.



THE SUN

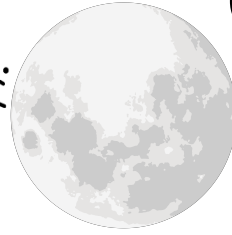


Did you know that at the very center of the solar system is a star that is bigger and brighter than the stars you see at night? That medium sized star is our sun.

The sun is a huge ball of spinning gases that produce a large amount of energy. This energy creates heat and light for the solar system. Without this heat and light, there would be no way to survive. The Earth is a perfect distance away. It takes eight minutes for the sun's energy to reach the Earth.

The sun is very hot. The surface temperature is about 5,000 degrees Fahrenheit. The core is even hotter with temperatures near 27 million degrees Fahrenheit! If just one spark from the sun gets to hit the Earth, it would set fire to everything within 60 miles of it! Luckily, that isn't something we have to worry about.

THE MOON



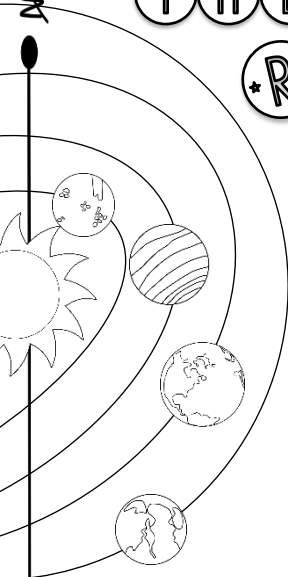
Generally at night when you look up in the sky you see a glowing sphere with the stars. That glowing sphere is the moon - but it doesn't create its own light. The light is coming from the sun.

The light from the sun bounces off the moon and reflects back to us on Earth. That creates the appearance of the moon glowing. Sometimes the Earth is blocking the light a little bit and this is what makes the moon appear to have different shapes, such as a half moon. The moon takes 29 1/3 days to orbit the Earth.

All planets have a moon except Mercury and Venus. Some planets even have multiple moons. For example, Jupiter has 29 moons orbiting it.

The moon is very different from Earth, as it does not have a magnetic field. However, it does have some "seas" of lava.

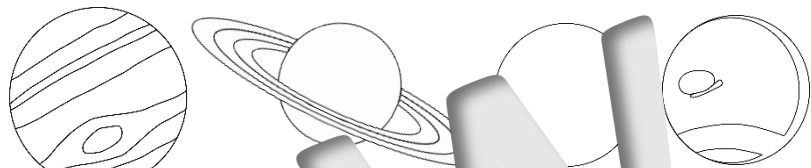
THE ROCKY PLANETS



Three Facts About
The Rocky Planets:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

THE GAS PLANETS



Three Facts About
The Gas Planets:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

PREVIEW

PREVIEW