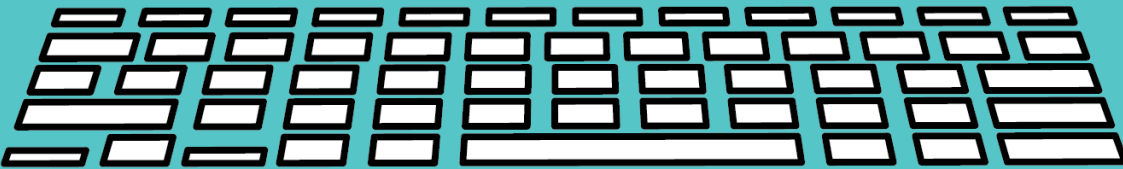


PLUTO HAS
MOUNTAINS
THAT CAN
REACH AS
HIGH AS
11,000 FEET

Short Answer	Type Answer Here
1. What is the name of the belt Pluto is in?	
2. Who gave Pluto its name?	
3. What year was dwarf planet Eris discovered?	
4. How many moons does Pluto have?	
5. What color does Pluto appear to be?	
6. What is the name of Pluto's furthest moon?	
7. How many dwarf planets are in the solar system?	
8. What is the last name of Pluto's discoverer?	



Short Answer	Type Answer Here	Fill in the Blank	Type Answer Here
1. Who is the name of the belt Pluto is in?		9. Pluto was once considered the ____ planet.	
2. Who gave Pluto its name?		10. Pluto consists of 70 percent ____ & 30 percent water ice.	
3. What year was dwarf planet Eris discovered?		11. The element ____ is named after Pluto.	
4. How many moons does Pluto have?		12. Pluto was demoted to a ____ planet.	
5. What color does Pluto appear to be?		13. The international ____ organization defined the ____ planet.	
6. What is the name of Pluto's furthest moon?		14. Pluto's thin atmosphere is 98 percent ____.	
7. How many dwarf planets are in the solar system?		15. Pluto is named after the Roman god of the ____.	
8. What is the last name of Pluto's discoverer?		16. A planet must ____ around the Sun.	



PLUTO

Pluto was once considered the 9th planet of the solar system. It is 3 to 5 billion miles from the Sun (5 to 7.5 billion kilometers). Pluto is about 1,400 miles (2,300 kilometers) across. That makes Pluto about two-thirds the size of Earth and about one-third the mass of Mercury. Pluto's diameter is about one-sixth of the moon's mass and one-fifth of its volume. However, Pluto is not considered a planet anymore. Interestingly, Pluto is not the only dwarf planet in the solar system. Other dwarf planets include Eris, Haumea, and Makemake.

In 2005, the dwarf planet Eris was discovered. Then, in 2006, the International Astronomical Union (IAU) defined what a planet is.

According to the IAU, a planet must meet three criteria:

1. It must orbit around the Sun.
2. It needs enough mass to have a nearly round shape.
3. It has "cleared the neighborhood" around its orbit. In other words, its gravity has cleared away any other similar objects near its orbit around the Sun.

Unfortunately, Pluto didn't meet the third requirement. Therefore, it was demoted to a dwarf planet - the largest known dwarf planet in the solar system. There are five dwarf planets in the solar system: Pluto, Eris, Ceres, Haumea, and Makemake. Pluto along with three other dwarf planets sit in the Kuiper Belt, an inclined ring around the Sun.

On February 18, 1930, Pluto was discovered by astronomer Clyde W. Tombaugh in Flagstaff, Arizona, using a telescope. A girl from Oxford, England named Venetia Burney named Pluto after the Roman god of the underworld. In Greek mythology, Pluto is named after Hades. Pluto was considered the son of Saturn. Saturn ruled the world alongside his brothers: Jupiter controlled the sky, Neptune controlled the sea, and Pluto controlled the underworld.

Pluto mainly consists of 70 percent rock and 30 percent water ice (nitrogen ice). About half of its mass is ice, and the other half is

rock. There is a rocky core with a blanket of water ice surrounding it. The surface appears to have mountains, valleys, and craters. Pluto is very bright in places but dark in other places. Scientists think the bright regions have frozen nitrogen gas. Pluto's thin atmosphere (like a comet) is 98 percent nitrogen with trace amounts of methane and carbon monoxide. Astronomers believe the reddish color of Pluto is from hydrocarbon molecules. A 100-pound person on Earth would only weigh 7 pounds on Pluto.

Pluto has five moons: Charon, Styx, Nix, Kerberos, and Hydra. Pluto's furthest moon is Hydra, and its closest moon is Charon. Charon is named after the minor god of the dead in Greek mythology. Some experts call Pluto and Charon a double planet instead of a planet and its moon. Astronomers believe Pluto's moons result from a collision between Pluto and a similar-sized object. Two of the moons (Kerberos and Styx) were only discovered after NASA's New Horizons passed by Pluto in July 2015. While Pluto has moons like other planets, it doesn't have any rings like Saturn.

Pluto has a unique rotation like Venus and Neptune. First, it moves east to west. Second, it rotates on its side like Neptune. Pluto takes 248 Earth days to orbit the Sun. Every 228 years, Pluto is closer to the Sun than Neptune due to its elongated path. For twenty years of the 97-year orbit, Pluto is closer to the Sun than Neptune. The last time this happened was in 1979-1991. One day on Pluto equals 153 hours or 6.4 Earth days.

Pluto does not receive much sunlight. It takes 5.5 hours for sunlight to reach the planet. To compare, it only takes 8.3 minutes for sunlight to reach Earth. Because of the speed of light, a radio signal from Earth takes four hours to reach Pluto.

Pluto is very cold, with an average temperature of -233 degrees Fahrenheit (-233 degrees Celsius). It is the coldest planet in the solar system. Even though water seems to be present, it would freeze as a rock.

It was common to name new elements after planets. Thus, in 1941, Glenn T. Seaborg named plutonium after Pluto.



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