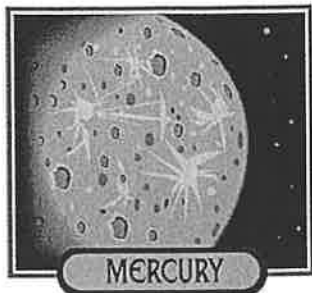


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Facts about Mercury



- In Roman mythology Mercury is the god of commerce, travel and thievery, the Roman counterpart of the Greek god Hermes, the messenger of the Gods. The planet received this name because it moves so quickly across the sky.

- Mercury is a small planet which orbits closer to the sun than any other planet in our solar system.
- Mercury has no moons.
- Mercury's surface is very hot, it features a barren, crater covered surface which looks similar to Earth's moon.
- Mercury is so close to the Sun, the daytime temperature is scorching reaching over 400 degrees Celsius.
- At night however, without an atmosphere to hold heat in, the temperatures plummet, dropping to -180 degrees Celsius.
- Mercury has a very low surface gravity.
- Mercury has no atmosphere which means there is no wind or weather to speak of.
- Mercury has no water or air on the surface.



Mercury's symbol

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Facts about Venus



- Venus is named after the Roman goddess of love and beauty.
- Venus is the second planet from the sun.
- Is the brightest object in the sky besides our Sun and the Moon.

- Has no moons.
- It is also known as the morning star because at sunrise it appears in the east. It is also known as evening star as it appears at sunset when it is in the west. It cannot be seen in the middle of the night.
- Venus and Earth are close together in space and similar in size, which is the reason Venus is called Earth's sister planet.
- Venus has more volcanoes than any other planet.
- It is the hottest planet in the solar system, even hotter than Mercury, which is closer to the Sun.
- The temperature on the surface of Venus is about 460° Celsius.
- The atmosphere on Venus is composed of carbon dioxide. The surface is heated by radiation from the sun, but the heat cannot escape through the clouds and layer of carbon dioxide. (This is a "greenhouse effect").



Venus' symbol

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Facts about Earth



- All of the planets, except for Earth, were named after Greek and Roman gods and goddesses. The name Earth is an Old English and German name which simply means soil.

- Earth is the third planet from the sun.

- Has one moon.
- It is the only planet that has liquid water on its surface.
- It is the only planet in the solar system that has life.
- The Earth is fragile. Its surface is split into plates (tectonic plates) which float on a rocky mantle – the layer between the surface of the earth, its crust, and its hot liquid core. The inside of the Earth is active and earthquakes, volcanoes and mountain building takes place along the boundaries of the tectonic plates.
- The Earth is larger than Mercury, Venus and Mars, the planets closest to it.
- The Earth differs from all the other planets because it has such a wide diversity of life and intelligent beings. This has only been possible because of the Earth's atmosphere which has protected the Earth and allowed life to flourish.



Earth's symbol

me: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Facts about Mars



- Mars was named after the Roman god of war, it is also described as the "Red Planet" because it is covered with rust-like dust.

- Mars is the fourth planet from the sun.

- It is the second smallest planet in the Solar System.

- Has two moons.
- Mars looks a lot like our home, though instead of blue oceans and green land, Mars is home to an ever present red tint. This is due to a mineral called iron oxide that is very common on the planet's surface.
- Mars has many massive volcanoes and is home to Olympus Mons, the largest volcano in our solar system, it stands 21km high and is 600km across the base.
- Mars has seasons like Earth too. These seasons are much longer than Earth seasons because Mars is so much farther from the sun.
- Mars experiences violent dust storms which continually change its surface.
- Mars has a very thin atmosphere made mostly of carbon dioxide. It is not thick enough to trap the sun's heat like Venus, so the planet is very cold. Temperatures range from -120 Degrees Celsius on winter nights to 25 Degrees Celsius in the summer.



Mars symbol

## Facts about Jupiter



- It is called after the ancient Roman sky-god, Jupiter, known to the Greeks as Zeus.
- Jupiter is the fifth planet from the sun.
- Jupiter is the largest planet in our Solar system. It is so big that more than 1300 Earths could fit inside it.

- Has 63 moons! The first 4 largest moons of Jupiter are called Galilean moons but 46 of them are much smaller ranging.
- Jupiter is the stormiest planet in the Solar System. There is a permanent, but ever-changing whirlpool of storms, known as Jupiter's Great Red Spot which can be seen using a telescope.
- The Red Spot was first seen by Robert Hooke in 1664.
- Jupiter is the first of the "gas giants", Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune.
- Jupiter is made of hydrogen, helium, methane and ammonia. The cloudy sphere has bright belts on it which change their shape.
- If you were to descend into Jupiter, the thin, cold atmosphere becomes thicker and hotter, gradually turning into a thick, dark fog. In the blackness about 1000km down the pressure squeezes the atmosphere so hard that it becomes like liquid.



Jupiter's symbol

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Facts about Saturn



- Saturn was named after the ancient Roman god of agriculture.
- Is the sixth planet from the sun.
- Saturn is the second largest planet in our Solar System, after the giant Jupiter.

- Has 62 moons!
- Saturn is the last planet that can be seen without using a telescope or binoculars and the planet was known in the ancient world before telescopes were invented. The rings, however, can only be seen using a telescope.
- The rings were first seen by Galileo in 1610 through a telescope.
- The rings are made up of millions of ice crystals, some as big as houses and others as small as specks of dust.
- The four largest outer planets, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, are known as the "gas giants" since it is thought they are entirely made up of dense layers of gas. Saturn is a great ball of hydrogen and helium.
- Saturn is very light as it is made up of more hydrogen than helium so it is less dense.
- Saturn is not a peaceful planet. Storm winds race around the atmosphere at 800kmp/h.



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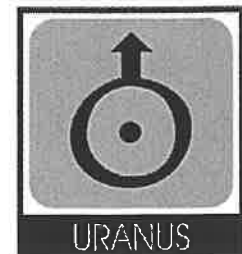
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## Facts about Uranus



- Uranus was named after the Greek god of the sky.
- Is the seventh planet from the sun.
- Uranus was the first planet discovered by telescope.

- Has 27 moons.
- Uranus was first seen by William Herschel in 1781 during a survey of the sky using a telescope.
- Rolls like a barrel rather than spinning like Earth and the other planets in our Solar System.
- Uranus is the coldest planet in our Solar System.
- Uranus is one of the "gas giants", the four outer planets which are entirely composed of gas, Jupiter, Saturn and Neptune.
- Uranus is the smallest of the four "giants", but is still several times larger than the Earth.
- Uranus's atmosphere is mostly hydrogen but it also contains large amounts of a gas called methane. Methane absorbs red light and scatters blue light so a blue-green methane haze hides the interior of the planet from view.



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## Facts about Neptune



- Neptune is named after the Roman god of the sea.
- Is the eighth planet in the Solar System.
- Is the farthest planet from the Sun in the Solar System.

- Has 13 moons.
- Neptune is one of the four "gas giants". Like Jupiter, Saturn and Uranus, it is composed only of gas. Neptune is a great ball of hydrogen and helium.
- In the same year that Neptune was first seen, 1846, its first moon was also spotted and named Triton. Triton is a most unusual moon since it orbits Neptune in the opposite direction of Neptune's own rotation on its axis. All the other major satellites (moons) in the Solar System follow their planets round as they turn.
- Neptune is a large, water planet with a blue hydrogen-methane atmosphere and faint rings.
- Neptune suffers the most violent weather in our Solar System.
- Storms have been spotted swirling around its surface and freezing winds that blow about ten times faster than hurricanes on Earth making it the windiest planet in the Solar System.

