

Planet Place Clues

Use order and traits to identify planets in the solar system.

4.5.b “planets have characteristics and a specific order in the solar system; and”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Write 1 through 8 above the first appearance of each planet name, then underline one detail that tells a characteristic of each planet.

A Trip Outward from the Sun

- ① Our solar system has eight planets that travel around the Sun. Their order is based on distance from the Sun, not on planet size. Mercury is first and is small, rocky, and covered with craters. Venus is second. It has thick clouds and is the hottest planet. Earth is third, with liquid water and air that supports life.
- ② The next planets are Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Mars, the fourth planet, is a cold, rocky world with a reddish surface. Jupiter, fifth, is the largest planet and has a huge storm called the Great Red Spot. Saturn is sixth and has bright rings made mostly of ice pieces. Uranus is seventh, and Neptune is eighth.
- ③ The four planets closest to the Sun are rocky. The four farther planets are much larger, and each has many moons. Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune also have rings, although Saturn's rings are easiest to see. A planet's place in the order does not tell every characteristic. For example, Earth is smaller than Neptune even though Earth is closer to the Sun.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Which planet comes directly before Earth, and which planet comes directly after Earth?

2 What determines a planet's order in the solar system? What does not determine its order?

3 Compare Mars and Jupiter. State each planet's number in order and one characteristic.

4 List the four planets farther from the Sun in order, starting with the one closest to the Sun.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose four different planets from the passage. Fill in the table with each planet's order number and one characteristic that helps identify it.

PLANET	ORDER NUMBER	ONE CHARACTERISTIC

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Write 1 through 8 above the first appearance of each planet name, then underline one detail that tells a characteristic of each planet. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which planet comes directly before Earth, and which planet comes directly after Earth?	Venus comes before Earth, and Mars comes after Earth.
2	What determines a planet's order in the solar system? What does not determine its order?	Distance from the Sun determines the order. Planet size does not determine the order.
3	Compare Mars and Jupiter. State each planet's number in order and one characteristic.	Mars is fourth and is a cold, rocky planet with a reddish surface. Jupiter is fifth, is the largest planet, and has the Great Red Spot.
4	List the four planets farther from the Sun in order, starting with the one closest to the Sun.	Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

PLANET	ORDER NUMBER	ONE CHARACTERISTIC
Mercury	1	Small, rocky, and covered with craters
Earth	3	Has liquid water and air that supports life
Saturn	6	Has bright rings made mostly of ice pieces
Neptune	8	Has rings and many moons

Accept accurate characteristics stated in the passage. For the table, accept any four different planets with the correct order number and a matching characteristic.