

Suzy's World

How big is space?



Fact

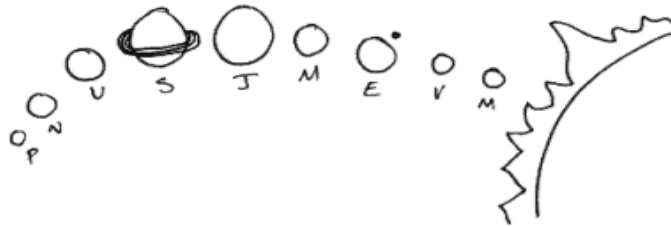
- You couldn't drive your car to another planet – you'd need a rocket.
- Mars is the closest planet to Earth but it would take about 65 years if I drove there in a car doing 100kms, or over 150 days if I was in a rocket.
- It could take about 7 years for a rocket to get to Saturn.
- Driving to Pluto would take longer than 6,200 years.
- Driving to the Sun, our nearest star, it would take me about 171 years driving at 100 kmph or about 25 days in a rocket travelling at 246,960 km per hour!

Do you know

- There are 9 planets in our solar system and they all orbit (circle) the sun.
- Our Solar System is one of many millions in our Galaxy, the Milky Way.
- New Zealand and other countries in the Southern Hemisphere face the centre of the Milky Way.
- There are about 100 billion galaxies in the universe.
- The Sun is a star and is made from nuclear energy.
- Mercury is closest to the Sun and is the hottest planet (it would be hotter than living in a fire).
- Pluto is the furthest from the sun and the coldest planet (it would be colder than living in a freezer). Since making this episode Pluto has been reclassified as a dwarf planet.
- A single day on Mercury, from sunrise to sunset, would last 176 days on Earth.

Experiments you can do

- Can you name all the planets in the order from the sun? I'll give you the first initial for each to help you. M, V, E, M, J, S, U, N, P.



- Look for the first star of the night. Where is it? Does it appear in the same place every night? See if you can find out its name.

Other Investigations

Visit your local library and have a look at the many books they have about planets and space. Choose a planet and see what you can find out about it – is it the hottest planet in our galaxy? Is it the biggest? Does it have lots of moons or just one like Earth? Maybe you could let me know the interesting things you find out about the planet you choose.

Jokes

What do you do when you see a spaceman? You park in it, man.

Why did Mickey Mouse go to Space? To find Pluto
From Kate Leach