

Planetary Mnemonic

Background Information

The word solar means "of the Sun." Our solar system is made up of the Sun, eight planets, one dwarf planet, their moons, and smaller objects (comets, asteroids, and meteoroids). The planets, moons, and smaller objects are held in orbit by the Sun's gravity.

The sun is the only star in our solar system. Even though it's just an average-sized star, the Sun is still bigger and more massive than everything else in our solar system put together. Planets are bodies of rock or gas that orbit around a star.

The eight planets and one dwarf planet in our solar system are Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. Making up a mnemonic phrase is a good way to remember the order of the planets, from closest to the Sun to furthest away. In a mnemonic phrase, the first letter of each word helps you remember a list of things.

My	Very	Earthy	Mother	Just	Served	Us	Nine	Pizzas
E	E	A	A	U	A	R	E	L
R	N	R	R	P	T	A	P	U
C	U	T	S	I	U	N	T	T
U	S	H		T	R	U	U	O
R				E	N	S	N	
Y				R			E	

There are many variations of this mnemonic. This activity will review and reinforce what students have learned about the planets in the Solar System.

Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will be able to:

- define mnemonic.
- create a mnemonic in reference to the planets of our solar system.
- share their mnemonic with the class to assist students with memorization

Instruction Time

30 Minutes

Materials

- Astronomer Journal page 11
- Pencils

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Procedure

1. Explain what a mnemonic is to students and give them an example in general and for the planets.
2. Have students work with a partner, or in small groups and use page 11 of the Astronomer Journal to create their own mnemonic to help them memorize the order of the planets from the Sun. Allow 5 to 10 minutes.
3. Next, students should present their mnemonics to the class, using them to recite the order of the planets from memory.
4. Once the students have presented their mnemonics, have them complete the worksheet on the following page.
5. If no one has mentioned the Asteroid Belt, have the students note its location between the fourth and fifth planet. Explain that more information will be provided in the next lesson, Inner & Outer Planets.

Expected Results & Explanations

Upon completion of this activity, students should be able to order the planets. With the use of the Solar System search, students gained knowledge about the planets. Now that they have some background information about the planets, the next step is to be able to recite, or place the planets in the correct orbit.

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PLANETS IN ORDER

Follow these directions to review your planetary mnemonic.

1. Color the Sun and the planets.
2. Cut on the dark lines. Be careful not to lose any planets.
3. Glue the ends with the stars together.
4. Glue the planets in order.
5. Write your name on the back of the strip.