

The Scoop on the Solar System: Incorporating Nonfiction Literature to Build Reading Skills

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Overview

As a student in early elementary school, I remember being fascinated by learning about the Solar System. I am not sure if it was the catchy phrase "My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas" that helped me remember the order of the planets, or if it was the exposure to nonfiction text.

Nevertheless, learning about the Solar System was one of my fondest memories in school. It was so interesting and fascinating that I found myself immersed in literature about space and the Solar System in and out of the school setting.

In my current position as a school teacher in an inner city school, I encounter struggling readers each and every year. Many of them come to my classroom at least a year or more behind in reading. This is mainly due to a lack in prior experiences and background knowledge due to time or financial situations within their families.

As I reflected on my past learning experiences and researched present educational knowledge, I decided to write a unit incorporating the nonfiction topic of the Solar System and planets to help build reading strategies to struggling readers. This would be an interesting topic for students because nonfiction text generally sparks interest in young learning minds.

This application of nonfiction literature would not only increase individual schema and background knowledge, but it would also help build the foundation for third grade science skills as they studied and explored more in depth topics of the Solar System.

While attending the seminar, "Exploring the Solar System" led by Susan Trammell from The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, I further realized how I could use astronomy topics dealing with the Solar System and planets as well as incorporating topics of weather and seasons for my second graders to increase their reading skills.

I would use these elements in a workshop setting to build background science information and to promote reading skills through exposure and direct instruction with nonfiction text, decoding, word recognition, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension to generate a comprehensive literacy unit for teachers in a similar position.

I am creating a nonfiction literacy based unit involving topics dealing with the Solar System in order to improve background knowledge and intertwine nonfiction elements into reading instruction.

My objective is for other teachers to find this unit useful for teaching science topics, "the scoop on the solar system", and also promoting reading skills for all students involved. The application of nonfiction text will create interesting and meaningful opportunities to promote reading skills for struggling readers.

Demographics

J. H. Gunn Elementary School is an urban elementary school serving over 750 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The school is located in Charlotte, North Carolina in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District. The school district is the second largest in North Carolina and the nineteenth largest in the nation.

This school has a multicultural population where 75% of students receive Free and Reduced Lunch due to socioeconomic status. The school strives each year to meet all 27 of its AYP goals and to bridge the gap for below grade level achieving students.

I am a second grade teacher at this school. I have taught at this school for the past seven years in first, second and third grade. I have experienced the vertical planning aspect by teaching in a variety of grades. I have also seen the developmental process of students *learning to read* in grades K-1 and *reading to learn* in grades 2-3.

I am currently the individual "reading teacher" on our grade level. I teach math to my homeroom class and then facilitate two reading workshop groups of low performing second graders across the grade level. In the morning, I teach one workshop group to "intensive" students, those performing extremely below grade level. In the afternoon, I teach another workshop group to "strategic" readers, those students who are below grade level but not to an extreme measure. For the basis of this unit, I will be applying the skills and strategies to my "strategic" group of students due to time and availability of resources and materials.

I teach using the North Carolina Standard Course of Study while incorporating Pat Cunningham's Four Blocks along with various differentiated teaching methods, resources, and strategies for teaching and promoting reading skills.

Rationale

This nonfiction literacy unit is based on the Solar System and is intended for second graders reading below grade level to promote literacy skills, build background knowledge and ultimately increase overall reading abilities.

This unit focuses on skills such as decoding, learning high frequency words, exposure to new vocabulary and practicing oral fluency all based on nonfiction information about the Solar System.

Students will be exposed to nonfiction topics in order to learn more about the Solar System and expand their background knowledge to assist them in third grade when the Solar System is

explicitly taught.

Since I teach at a low-level socioeconomic school with many struggling readers I will use science themed lessons to design learning opportunities for my students to promote literacy development in the areas of decoding, word recognition, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension of nonfiction text.

I will use leveled text for their ability levels and higher leveled text such as class read alouds to promote comprehension skills and model good reading strategies in the classroom.

My unit will begin with topics regarding seasons. Learning about the seasons is a familiar topic with students they can feel successful with but generally have questions pertaining to seasonal characteristics and weather patterns.

Weather will be the next topic of discussion as the season information will scaffold that instruction. Students will learn about different weather and weather patterns in print and online. Direct instruction and background information will be taught in order to set the background knowledge for the upcoming topic, the Solar System.

Earth, other planets and the Sun will be introduced in the next section of our unit as we “explore the Solar System.” After introductory information, students will take part in researching a chosen planet and become “planet experts” on a particular planet. Information and research findings will be shared with other classmates in class.

At the end of this unit, students will have had exposure to solar system topics that will be taught more in depth in the upcoming school year. They will also have improved their reading skills by being exposed to strategies in a guided reading setting for decoding, new vocabulary, comprehension and cooperative learning.

Background

According to G. E. Tompkins in the 2006 edition of *Excerpt from Language Arts Essentials (1)*, there are several factors for reading instruction that promote reading skills. Those factors include: word identification, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and motivation.

By directly teaching reading skills and strategies in these areas, along with modeled reading skills and thinking aloud with selected text in the classroom, students will increase his or her reading abilities.

Decoding/Word Recognition

According to LaBerge & Samuels (2), "capable readers have a large bank of words they recognize instantly and automatically because they can't stop and analyze every word as they read. Through a combination of instruction and reading practice, students' knowledge of words continues to grow."

In this unit, I will incorporate word identification and decoding skills in order to increase word knowledge and how to sound out unknown words for struggling readers to promote quick recognition, strategies for success and ultimately increased vocabulary knowledge.

Vocabulary

J. Pikulski and S. Templeton describe the power of vocabulary in their 2004 article, *Teaching and Developing Vocabulary: Key to Long-Term Reading Success* (3). They quote that the "greatest tools we can give our students for succeeding, not only in their education but in life, is a large, rich vocabulary."

In my nonfiction literacy unit on the Solar System, I plan to use daily read aloud books and other literature to expose and broaden student vocabulary. By increasing their vocabulary, I will ultimately increase their reading skills because they are being presented with new information that will increase their background knowledge and schema for future reading experiences.

Fluency

The National Reading Panel report (4) defines reading fluency as "...the ability to read text quickly, accurately and with proper expression." Capable readers have learned to read fluently—quickly and with expression. Three components of fluency are reading speed, word recognition, and prosody (Rasinski, 2004).

In this unit, I will use leveled books and reading passages based on the Solar System, planets and weather on independent reading levels for fluency practice. By practicing fluency, students will have practice and capabilities of reading "quickly and with expression." This reading strategy will promote the next level of learning, comprehension.

Comprehension

Comprehension is the main goal of reading instruction. It is the top of the "reading mountain" so to speak. Comprehension is not only important in the present when a student is reading and responding to text, but it is important for future learning opportunities for recalling information.

By teaching students interesting nonfiction material and making learning meaningful and fun for them, they will better be able to comprehend text that is read and have the ability to recall information at a later time.

One of the primary goals in this unit is to build background knowledge of science for the upcoming year. By teaching steps that promote comprehension (decoding, vocabulary and fluency), students will be better equipped for learning and retaining the information about weather, the Solar System and planets.

Strategies

Some strategies I plan to use include **journaling**. Science journaling in the form of a composition or spiral notebook will be used on a daily basis to integrate writing across the

curriculum. Students will have opportunities to write, ask questions, record observations, illustrate, etc. in their own science journals. It will be a place of reflection as well as time to integrate science and writing.

The unit will begin with a pre-reading strategy, **Turn and Talk**, to discuss prior knowledge of each topic (seasons/weather/Solar System). This allows students to orally discuss their thoughts and prior information in a non-threatening way before beginning the unit.

A **KWL** chart will be completed as a guide for learning and for discussion of what students would like to know for each subject: seasons, weather and the Solar System. The KWL charts will be maintained throughout the unit in order to optimize learning and ensure all students have had the opportunity to have their questions answered.

Read alouds will be used throughout the unit to model proper reading skills, increase vocabulary, as well as promote class discussion and comprehension. Titles include but are not limited to: Good Night Moon and Buenas Noches Luna by Margaret Wise Brown, The Moon Book by Gail Gibbons, Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me by Eric Carle and Moondance by Frank Asch.

During the seasonal and weather instruction activities of the unit, students will create a **foldable book** to gather and present all the information on these topics. Different folds of paper will be taught and information will be included in the foldable book as a learning tool that will result in a product every child will individually create. Folding techniques can be learned from Dinah Zikes publication, *Foldables*.

Students will make an additional foldable at the end of the unit that summarizes what they have learned about the Solar System and the planets. Students will be given the opportunity to keep and use this resource next year in third grade. Foldable books will be tools students can also use to promote literacy skills as they reread their foldable entries and read other foldable books created by their peers.

Leveled readers will be created and used in order to promote decoding skills, word recognition as well as increase vocabulary. Leveled readers will be on students' instructional level when used in **guided reading** and on independent reading levels when reading alone. Leveled readers will cover a variety of topics, high frequency words as well as more difficult vocabulary words that would require the students to use their decoding and word recognition skills. Examples of leveled readers are included in the appendix section.

The educational website **readinga-z.com** will be used for guided reading sessions through the use of leveled readers, discussion questions as well as comprehension quizzes. Reading A to Z is a great resource for nonfiction print materials and readers are already leveled for teachers to use in a guided reading setting and for independent reading to promote fluency.

Nasa.gov is an educational and free website I have learned about in the "Exploring the Solar System" seminar. I will use this site for students in several ways. Under the student section tab, you can specify K-4 in order to condense the material presented. Students will use this site as

they research and gather information to be presented in the “planet expert books” they create. I will also use the images on this site for activities and readers I create since the images are copyright free.

As the unit progresses, information about the Solar System and planets will be gathered from **educational websites** on the Internet. **Discoveryeducation.com** is another great resource for videos students can watch regarding seasons, weather, planets and the Solar System. Students will have opportunities to view these digital streaming videos to promote background knowledge by exposing them to visual aids and scientific information.

Students will learn the locations of the planets from the Sun in an **integrated art activity** after collaboration with the art teacher. In order to incorporate the arts, I will facilitate with the art teacher for students to participate in a painting activity. After reading Eric Carle's, Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me, they will participate in creating a visual of the Solar System with planet locations from the Sun using coordinating planet colors and characteristics they have learned (example: blues and greens for Earth). Students will assemble the planets in relation to the Sun in order to visualize the order and review planet locations.

I will also help internalize the *sizes of other planets compared to Earth* by using food samples. For example: if Earth were a grape, Jupiter would be a pineapple. Various fruits and vegetables will be used for this visual demonstration.

Another read aloud that will be expanded on after presenting in class is, Good Night Moon. Students will use **poetry** read aloud that also deal with the Moon to promote decoding and fluency. Such poems can include: *I See the Moon*, *The Man in the Moon* and *Hey Diddle Diddle*.

After students have been exposed to planet information, they will become an expert on a planet of their choice by researching and creating a mini-book about that planet. These mini-books will include more in-depth facts and characteristics about a particular planet that students have researched.

Mini-books will be used throughout the rest of the unit as familiar rereads that will help build vocabulary and fluency to promote reading. Mini books will be created individually by students regarding individual planet information. These mini-books will be the product of the “planet expert” research the students conducted from print and online.

Students will include basic and interesting planet information to share with their peers. Students will make groups of eight (one expert from each planet). These mini groups will use their expert information to teach other group members about the planet they researched. Interesting facts and vocabulary will be used and incorporated as well.

Throughout the unit, students will keep a **vocabulary** section in their journals to gain vocabulary knowledge by learning new words. During guided reading sessions, I will use vocabulary from nonfiction text about the Solar System to help improve reading abilities by giving exposure to different science topics and information.

Throughout the unit, students will be reading **leveled books**, rereading **mini books**, sharing science **journal entries** and **practicing fluency** with text related to the Solar System.

This unit will be a beneficial way to promote **cooperative learning**, **engaging students** in science topics as well as **integrating writing and the arts across the curriculum** for an ultimate goal of *increasing reading abilities, promoting literacy development* and *setting a foundation* for topics that will be taught in third grade that require prior knowledge of nonfiction text in order to succeed.

Classroom Activities

Activity # 1-Making Clouds

Objective: Students will conduct an experiment where they will make clouds in a bottle after studying the differences in seasons and weather climates on Earth.

Materials:

1 2-liter clear plastic soda bottle with lid,
smaller soda bottles with lids for independent partner practice
a box of matches (used only under adult supervision)
warm water

Teacher Input:

The teacher will conduct this experiment when students have background knowledge about weather changes and seasonal characteristics. This experiment will help promote understanding of the water cycle and temperatures after learning about weather and seasonal changes on Earth.

Guided Practice:

The teacher will conduct the experiment for the students since matches are involved. The teacher will fill one third of the plastic soda bottle with warm water and attach the lid. As the water evaporates, water vapor will be added to the air inside the bottle.

The teacher will demonstrate repeated squeezing and releasing of the bottle to represent the warming and cooling in the atmosphere. The teacher will take off the cap of the bottle. Then, he or she will use the matches by lighting one and placing it near the opening of the bottle. After the match is lit, the teacher will drop the match in the bottle and close the lid to trap the smoke inside the bottle.

Again, the teacher will repeatedly squeeze the bottle and then release. If the experiment goes correctly, a cloud will appear when the bottle is released and disappear when the bottle is squeezed. This experiment will showcase the three things clouds need to form: water vapor, particles in the air and a drop in air pressure.

Independent Practice:

Students can independently practice creating clouds and experimenting with these weather topics by completing this experiment with a partner. The teacher will facilitate the lighting and dropping of the matches into the individual bottles. Students will follow up on this experiment by illustrating and describing what happened in science journals and or a follow up science experiment sheet (See Figure 1).

Activity # 2-The Size of the Planets

Objective:

Students will begin to internalize the size of the different planets by using various food items to represent and discuss the planets in the Solar System.

Materials:

giant pumpkin or seasonal orange pumpkin garbage bag-SUN

pineapple-JUPITER

large orange or cantaloupe or coconut-SATURN

lime-URANUS

kiwi-NEPTUNE

small grape-EARTH

large blueberry-VENUS

pea or navy bean-MARS

uncooked orzo pasta-MERCURY

Teacher Input:

The teacher will arrange the "planet" material in order based on positions from the Sun. The teacher will explain how these objects are not to scale but are a good representation of how our planet, Earth, compares to other planets in the Solar System.

Guided Practice:

The teacher will demonstrate to the class how to order the objects from the Sun based on their position in the Solar System. The teacher will facilitate a discussion on how the different "planet" materials compare to one another. For example, students will be able to see the comparison of a small grape for Earth and the pineapple for Jupiter.

Independent Practice:

Students will use the objects to see the relation of Earth to other planets in the Solar System. Students will take notes on the size of the other planets by comparing and contrasting the available food items. After note taking and discussion, students can practice labeling and then putting the planets in order based on their location from the Sun. Students can also use the materials to demonstrate how the planets revolve around the Sun by having one student hold the

pumpkin in the middle and other students using the other "planet" material to revolve in order around the Sun. After students have learned more information about planets, they can use a compare and contrast graphic organizer to determine similarities and differences with planet characteristics and sizes. An example of a this organizer can be found on the Read, Write, Think website. The website address is: [HYPERLINK](http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson275/compcn_chart.pdf)

"http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson275/compcn_chart.pdf" www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson275/compcn_chart.pdf.

Activity # 3-Craters, Craters, Everywhere

Objective:

After learning about the Moon, students will explore the formation of craters by creating them using cornstarch.

Materials:

(The materials listed below are for a class demonstration. You will need more of the same ingredients for students recreating the experiment in small groups.)

cornstarch

various sizes of marbles and rubber bouncy balls

baking tray

Teacher Input:

The teacher will explain that the Moon is full of craters. Craters are formed when something, such as a meteorite, hits the Moon. When this happens, craters cause permanent indentions into the surface of the Moon. The teacher may wish to show a realistic picture of the Moon at this point.

Guided Practice:

The teacher will facilitate by providing a discussion on craters. Time will be spent for students to learn about the Moon and characteristics of the Moon. Craters will be taught and demonstrated in this lesson. The teacher will have the cornstarch already in the baking tray. A thick layer of cornstarch works best. The cornstarch will be smoothed out and ready for crater formation to occur. The teacher will demonstrate dropping various sized objects from above into the baking tray. The marbles and or bouncy balls will be temporary absorbed into the cornstarch. The teacher will gently remove the balls and or marbles to reveal the formation of craters.

Independent Practice:

Students will have the opportunity to create their own craters by completing the same steps as the teacher in the guided practice section. Students will have the opportunity to create craters in partners or small groups. They will reflect on information about craters by making connections with the crater activity and the craters that can be seen on the Moon. Students will complete a

science experiment sheet to reflect on the experiment and what they learned in this activity (See Figure 1).

Activity # 4-Solar System Scavenger Hunts

Objective:

Students will review facts about the Solar System by completing a scavenger hunt for information.

Materials:

Solar System fact cards (See Figure 2)

Solar System question and answer sheet (See Figure 3)

Teacher Input:

The teacher will review the directions for completing the scavenger hunt. Students will look around the room for fact cards. After finding the fact cards, students will use the information provided to complete the scavenger hunt question and answer sheet. This activity can be completed individually or with a partner.

Guided Practice:

The students will search around the room for fact cards. The fact cards will provide factual information and vocabulary that the students will have to use in order to complete the scavenger hunt question and answer sheet.

Independent Practice:

Students will complete the scavenger hunt individually or with a partner as an entertaining way to learn and recall facts about planets and the Solar System.

Activity # 5-Planet Experts

Objective:

After learning about different planets in the Solar System, students will choose one to research and become a planet expert on. Students will transfer their planet expertise to a mini book to present and share with the class in small groups. A mini book is the size of 1/4 of a piece of paper.

Materials:

planet information in print or online
computer paper

scissors
markers/crayons

Teacher Input:

The teacher will explain how students will be creating a mini book based on a planet of their choice. Students will have to research and gather information about their planet. After gathering information, students will create a mini book showcasing their information.

Guided Practice:

Students will complete a planet reporting form to gather information about their planet. Then, they will transfer that information into a mini book. For this age group, some appropriate information would be:

What is the name of your planet?

What is the position of your planet from the Sun?

Tell me about the size of your planet.

How long does it take your planet to orbit the Sun?

What is the temperature like on your planet?

Tell me about the appearance of your planet.

Does your planet have any moons? If so, how many?

Does your planet have rings?

Are there any special facts about your planet?

Independent Practice:

Students will have time in and out of class to research and gather planet information. The facts will be presented in a mini book for organizing and reporting planet information. Students will become the "expert" of their chosen planet and present their booklet and findings to their group. Groups will be composed of 8 in order to have one representative for each planet in the Solar System. Students interested in more than one planet can create various mini books.

Notes

(1) Tompkins, Gail E.. *Language arts essentials* . Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall, 2006. Print.

(2) LaBerge, David, and S. Jay Samuels. *Basic processes in reading: perception and comprehension*. Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum Associates; 1977. Print.

(3) Pikulski, John and Shane Templeton. "Teaching and Developing Vocabulary: Key to Long-Term Reading Success", *Current Research in Reading/Language Arts* (2004).

(4) Bonnie B. Armbruster, "Put Reading First : the Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read : Kindergarten Through Grade 3" (*Jessup, MD: National Institute For Literacy, National Institute Of Child Health And Human Development, U.S. Dept. Of Education, 2001*).

Resources

[Annotated Bibliography for Teachers](#)

Armbruster, Bonnie. "Put Reading First : the Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read : Kindergarten Through Grade 3" (*Jessup, MD: National Institute For Literacy, National Institute Of Child Health And Human Development, U.S. Dept. Of Education, 2001*).

*This is a great resource for learning how to teach children to read. There is a great amount of research based information as well as strategies and how to help in and out of the classroom.

Carson, Mary Kay. *Exploring the Solar System: A History with 22 Activities*. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2008. Print.

*This is an informative book to learn about the Solar System as well as activities to incorporate in the classroom.

LaBerge, David, and S. Jay Samuels. *Basic processes in reading: perception and comprehension*. Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum Associates; 1977. Print.

*This is an informative resource for learning about comprehension and how to help struggling readers.

Pikulski, John and Shane Templeton. "Teaching and Developing Vocabulary: Key to Long-Term Reading Success", *Current Research in Reading/Language Arts* (2004).

*This article gives noteworthy information about why vocabulary instruction is so important in the classroom.

Scott, Elaine. *When is a Planet Not a Planet?: The Story of Pluto*. New York: Clarion Books, 2007. Print.

*This book is a resource for learning about why Pluto is not considered a planet anymore.

The Art of Eric Carle. New York: Philomel, 2002. Print.

*The history and art of the popular children's artist is found in this book.

Tompkins, Gail E.. *Language arts essentials* . Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall, 2006. Print.

*This book is a resource used for understanding the tools needed for success in reading.

Tyson, Neil deGrasse. *The Pluto Files: The Rise and Fall of America's Favorite Planet*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2009. Print.

*This book is a another resource for learning about why Pluto is not considered a planet anymore.

Reading List for Students

Asch, Frank. *Bear shadow* . Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1985. Print.

Branley, Franklyn M.. *The Planets in Our Solar System (Let's-Read-and-Find-Out Science, Stage 2)*. Ill ed. New York: Harper Trophy, 1998. Print.

Brown, Margaret Wise, and Clement Hurd. *Goodnight moon* . New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947. Print.

Carle, Eric. *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me*. New York: Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, 1991. Print.

Cole, Joanna. *The Magic School Bus Inside The Earth*. New York: Biryongso, 1999. Print.

Cole, Joanna. *The Magic School Bus Lost In The Solar System (Turtleback School & Library Binding Edition)*. New York: Turtleback, 1992. Print.

Gibbons, Gail. *Planet Earth/Inside Out [PLANET EARTH/INSIDE OUT] [Paperback]*. New York: Morrow Junior Books, 1998. Print.

Rabe, Tish. *There's No Place Like Space: All About Our Solar System (Cat in the Hat's Learning Library)*. New York: Random House Books for Young Readers, 1999. Print.

Simon, Seymour. *Weather*. London: Collins, 2006. Print.
Chicago formatting by BibMe.org.

List of Materials for Classroom Use

Various read alouds on topics such as seasons, weather, Solar System and planets
Guided reading lessons incorporating literacy needs with science topics dealing with the Solar System
Chart paper for KWL charts
Computer paper and art supplies for mini books and Eric Carle Activities
Leveled readers (examples attached in file nguevara-leveledreaders.doc)
Readinga-z.com supplemental material

Discoveryeducation.com for steaming videos to incorporate technology
Poems about the Solar System and planets

(Figure 1)

Name:

Date:

Science Experiment Report

Title of Experiment: _____

SHAPE * MERGEFORMAT
(Illustration of experiment)

Results of experiment:

What I learned:

(Figure 2) **Fact Cards** (These will need to be printed and placed throughout the room.)

Pictures are courtesy of nasa.gov

<p><u>Scavenger Hunt Fact Card</u></p> <p>There are 8 planets in our Solar System. Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune.</p> <p>INCLUDEPICTURE</p> <p>"http://www.nasa.gov/images/content/155854main_solar-system-montage-browse.jpg" *</p>	<p><u>Scavenger Hunt Fact Card</u></p> <p>There are different temperatures on different planets. However, the hottest planet is Venus. It is the hottest planet because it has many clouds that trap in heat.</p> <p>INCLUDEPICTURE</p> <p>"http://rocksfromspace.open.ac.uk/images/venus.jpg"</p>
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<p>MERGEFORMATINET</p> <p><u>Scavenger Hunt Fact Card</u> Card Jupiter is known for it's Great Red Spot which is actually a giant storm.  INCLUDEPICTURE "http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/image/planetary/jupiter/hst_jupiter_9929a1.jpg" * MERGEFORMATINET</p>	<p>* MERGEFORMATINET</p> <p><u>Scavenger Hunt Fact Card</u> Mars is known as the Red Planet because its surface has large amounts of iron deposits. INCLUDEPICTURE "http://whyfiles.org/194spa_travel/images/mars.gif" * MERGEFORMATINET</p>
<p><u>Scavenger Hunt Fact Card</u> The outer planets have rings and are called "Gas Giants." The outer planets with rings are Jupiter, Saturn, Neptune and Uranus. INCLUDEPICTURE "http://library.thinkquest.org/08aug/01698/thinnkquesttt/saturn_generic_600[1].jpg" * MERGEFORMATINET</p>	<p><u>Scavenger Hunt Fact Card</u> Earth is the only planet people have walked on. People have also walked on Earth's moon, but the Moon is not a planet. INCLUDEPICTURE "http://www.spacetoday.org/images/SolSys/Earth/EarthBlueMarbleWestTerraSat.jpg" * MERGEFORMATINET</p>
<p><u>Scavenger Hunt Fact Card</u> Venus is the planet with the most volcanoes. INCLUDEPICTURE "http://rocksfromspace.open.ac.uk/images/venus.jpg" * MERGEFORMATINET</p>	<p><u>Scavenger Hunt Fact Card</u> Pluto is now know of as a dwarf planet. Scientists thought it was too small to be classified as a planet. INCLUDEPICTURE "http://www.backtowild.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/09/pluto.jpg" * MERGEFORMATINET</p>
<p><u>Scavenger Hunt Fact Card</u> There are different temperatures on different planets. However, the coldest planet is Uranus. INCLUDEPICTURE "http://solarsystem.nasa.gov/multimedia/gallery/Uranus_Montage_br.jpg" * MERGEFORMATINET</p>	<p><u>Scavenger Hunt Fact Card</u> The planet that is closest to the Sun is Mercury. INCLUDEPICTURE "http://apod.nasa.gov/apod/image/0111/mercury_meriner10.jpg" * MERGEFORMATINET</p>

(Figure 3)

Name:

date:

Scavenger Hunt Questions and Answers

1. How many planets are in our Solar System?

2. What is Jupiter's Great Red Spot?

3. Which planet is the hottest planet?

4. Which planets have rings?

5. Which planet is known as the Red Planet?

6. What planet or planets have people walked on?

7. Which planet has the most volcanoes?

8. Which planet is the coldest planet?

9. Why isn't Pluto a planet anymore?

10. Which planet is the closest to the Sun?
