Lesson 1: The Sun and Our Solar System

Our star and its family · Grades 4-7

Name _____ Date _____

Read

The **Sun** is a star, a giant ball of very hot, glowing gas. It looks bigger and brighter than other stars only because it is so much closer. The Sun is about **93 million miles** from Earth, and its light takes about **8 minutes** to reach us. It is so large that about 109 Earths could line up across its face, and more than a million Earths could fit inside it.

The Sun and everything that travels around it make up the **solar system**. Eight **planets** orbit the Sun. In order from the Sun they are Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune. One way to remember the order is the sentence "**M**y **V**ery **E**ager **M**other **J**ust **S**erved **U**s **N**oodles."

The solar system also holds **dwarf planets** such as Pluto, which scientists reclassified as a dwarf planet in 2006; thousands of rocky **asteroids**, most of them in the **asteroid belt** between Mars and Jupiter; icy **comets** with glowing tails; and many **moons** circling the planets.

The Sun's pull of gravity keeps all of these objects in their paths. Its light and warmth make life on Earth possible. Genesis 1:16 calls the Sun "the greater light to rule the day."

Fast facts

- The Sun is a star
- About 93 million miles from Earth
- Sunlight reaches Earth in about 8 minutes
- 8 planets orbit the Sun
- Asteroid belt: between Mars and Jupiter
- Pluto: a dwarf planet since 2006

Think and answer

1. Why does the Sun look so much bigger and brighter than other stars?

2. List the eight planets in order from the Sun.

3. Name three other kinds of objects in the solar system besides planets.

4. What keeps the planets moving in their paths around the Sun?

© Printable Barn · printablebarn.com

Free sample page from printablebarn.com — get the full set there