

Astronomy: Our Solar System and Beyond

In this unit, students will learn more about our solar system and galaxy, other galaxies, and the universe.

What's the story?

Students will explore the **solar system**, the concept of **gravity**, and the exploration of **outer space** by reading an informational text that will take them on a journey through the **universe**.

What will my student learn?

Students will study the concept of **gravity and its effect** on the earth and other places in space. They will also learn about key people and events involved in the **study and exploration of outer space**. Students will explore the **sun**, the inner and outer **planets**, and the objects existing in our **solar system**. They will also study why planets stay in **orbit**.

Students will write in a variety of ways and for different purposes. They will complete a multiday **informative writing project** in which they will describe a day in the life of an astronaut on the International Space Station. Students will **collaborate** with their peers, **share ideas**, and **provide feedback** on one another's writing.

Conversation starters

Ask your student questions about the unit to promote discussion and continued learning:

1. Can you use **Many Very Energetic Mermaids Just Swam Under Neptune** to tell me the order of the planets?
2. What has been the most interesting planet you have learned about so far?
Follow up: Why? What have you learned about it? Compare it to another planet you have been reading about. How are they the same? How are they different?
3. What is the greenhouse effect?
4. What is a meteor?
Follow up: What is a meteoroid? And a meteorite?
5. What have you learned about the Milky Way?
Follow up: How did it get its name? How many galaxies do scientists believe there are? (billions)

6. What are some of the constellations you have been reading about?

Follow up: What colors can stars be? Why are they those colors? What stars are the hottest based on their color?