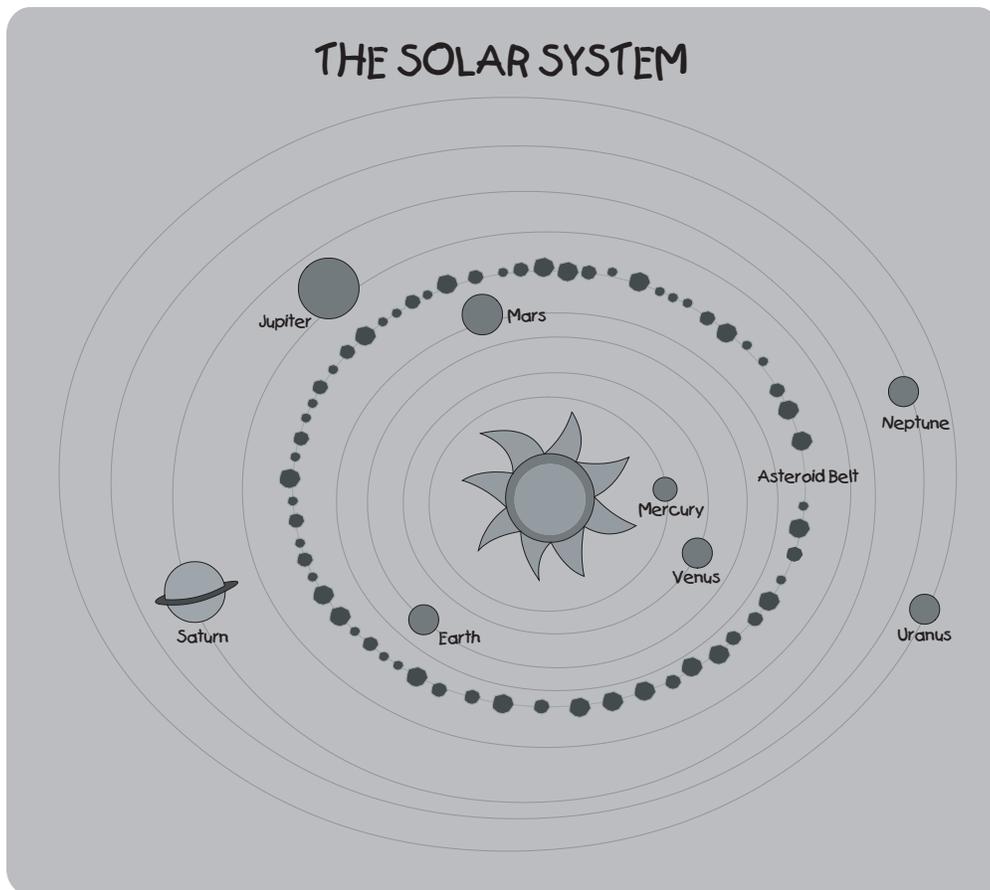


THE SOLAR SYSTEM AND THE PLANETS

What are the bodies that make up our solar system?

Our solar system consists of a sun, nine planets, and other small bodies that include moons, asteroids, and comets. The graph below shows the nine planets and the asteroid belt orbiting around the sun.



What happened to Pluto?

In August of 2006 the International Astronomical Union (IAU) downgraded Pluto to a "dwarf planet." According to the IAU a planet must satisfy three rules:

- 1) Orbit the sun
- 2) Be massive enough for its own gravity to pull it into a nearly round shape.
- 3) Clear the neighborhood around its orbit.

Pluto only satisfies the first two rules thus it was renamed a "dwarf planet." Poor Pluto!

The Solar System

Draw a picture of our solar system. Include the Sun, the eight planets, and the asteroid belt. Label each body appropriately.

Solar System Facts

		Miles from the Sun	Kind of planet	Time to go around the Sun	Rotation (1 day)	Number of moons
Inner Planets	MERCURY	36 million	terrestrial (rocky)	88 earth days	58 earth days	0
	VENUS	67 million	terrestrial	225 earth days	243 earth days	0
	EARTH	92 million	terrestrial	365 earth days	24 hours	1
	MARS	142 million	terrestrial	686 earth days	25 hours	2
Outer Planets	JUPITER	484 million	jovian (gas)	11 earth years	9.9 hours	18
	SATURN	887 million	jovian	29 earth years	10.2 hours	18
	URANUS	1,784 million	jovian	84 earth years	18 hours	15
	NEPTUNE	2,794 million	jovian	165 earth years	19 earth days	2

Answer the following questions.

- 1) List all of the gas planets: _____
- 2) List all of the terrestrial planets: _____
- 3) How many moons does Venus have? _____
- 4) How many miles is Earth from the Sun? _____
- 5) Which planet takes 365 days to go around the Sun? _____
- 6) How many miles is Neptune from the Sun? _____
- 7) Which planet has the shortest day? _____
- 8) Which planet has the longest day? _____
- 9) Name the planet that is 887,000,000 miles from the Sun. _____