

Visual Arts & Space Systems

SUMMARY: The Planets

Learning about the eight (or nine if you still love Pluto) planets is an important concept for every child's education. Not only are they core to our solar system, but they are also continuously developing and researching in this area. This means space will be an ongoing and changing part of each student's growing education. It is difficult to make the planets seem interesting by simple conversation, but by incorporating art into the discussion, your student's interest is bound to increase!

DEFINE: Planet

A celestial body that orbits around a star.

MATERIALS:

- Coffee filters
- Non-permanent markers
- Spray bottle with water
- Newspaper
- Poster paper
- Photos of planets

RESOURCES:

Did you know?
There is an observatory in Goldendale, WA!

www.goldendaleobservatory.com

STEPS:

Coffee Filter Planets (1st grade)

1. Discuss size and color of our solar system's planets. Note how planets have differing colors due to the things on the surfaces. For example, Mars is red/orange due to it having rusty rocks. Mercury is gray because it has rocks of the same color ... so let us make some planets!
2. Give each student one coffee filter per planet, the corresponding colors (listed below), and non-permanent markers.
3. Display a large image of a planet. While discussing and viewing the picture displayed, have your students color the designs he/she sees with markers onto the coffee filter -- strive to get a similar pattern on the coffee filter as the real planet.
4. Once the drawing is finished, have each student lay their filter down on a sheet of newspaper and mist with the spray bottle. It might be best to designate a few stations to this process. As the student mists the filters, they will witness the colors will swirl together like magic! Explain how a filter is made of little capillaries (tubes) that pulls water into them and forces it to move UPward (similar to how a plant's roots feeds the plant). Watch the magic happen and set aside to dry!



There are many variations to consider:

- The image above shows a class poster with the different planets on a door.
- Or paste planets on paper and label the paper (can use as flash cards).
- Or hang planets on window – the filters are semi-transparent and look pretty in the sun.
- Or cut the filters to show different sizes of the planets, too.
- Or place planets in a row from near to far on a wall. (My Very Enthusiastic Mother Just Served Us Noodles)

Planet Color Guide

Mercury- Gray/Brown **Venus-** Yellow/Brown **Earth-** Green/Blue **Mars-** Red/Orange **Jupiter-** Red/Brown/Orange/Yellow **Saturn-** Brown/Yellow **Uranus-** Blue **Neptune-** Blue/Purple

(Submitted by Sydnee Grant)