

Astronomy Unit
Bill Nye the Science Guy
The Planets

1. What direction do the planets always travel if you were observing them from the North Pole?

-if you were standing at the North Pole the planets would rotate in a counter clockwise direction above your head

2. What is the name given to the system of the nine planets rotating around the sun?

-the solar system

3. Name the nine- (9) planets in order from the sun. Give a basic description of each planet.

Planet- (Closest to the sun)

Brief Description

1- Mercury

-small/ heavy metals

2- Venus

-hot/ no moons/ toxic yellow clouds

3- Earth

-one moon/ protective atmosphere/ H₂O

4- Mars

-2 moons/ big, red, dead/ iron oxide/ cooler than E

5- Jupiter

-largest planet/ 16 moons/ one red spot

6- Saturn

-rings/ 18 moons

7- Uranus

-thin rings/ blue/ 14 moons

8- Neptune

-8 moons/ cold

9- Pluto

-last planet/ smallest/ 1 moon

4. If planets are not stars, why can you see them at night using a telescope?

-you are seeing the reflection of the light, which is being transmitted by the sun

5. What is the famous Red Spot on Jupiter?

-this is a swirling, turbulent red gas cloud

6. What is an ellipse?

-this is the shape of the planetary orbit

7. What are asteroids?

-these are bits of floating debris in space

8. Why is Mars often referred to as the Red Planet?

-Mars is covered in rust, otherwise known as iron oxide

9. Why does it take Pluto much longer than the Earth to orbit the sun?

-Earth is closer (it takes 1 year to orbit the sun)

-Pluto is further away (it takes 248 years to orbit the sun)

10. Do you think that man will ever fly to Mars? Explain your answer.