



Our Solar System

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

Solar systems begin in the **dust** and **gas clouds** found in between the **stars**. The **dust** is composed of elements like iron and carbon. The **gas clouds** are composed of hydrogen and helium. These dusty clouds are called **nebulae**.

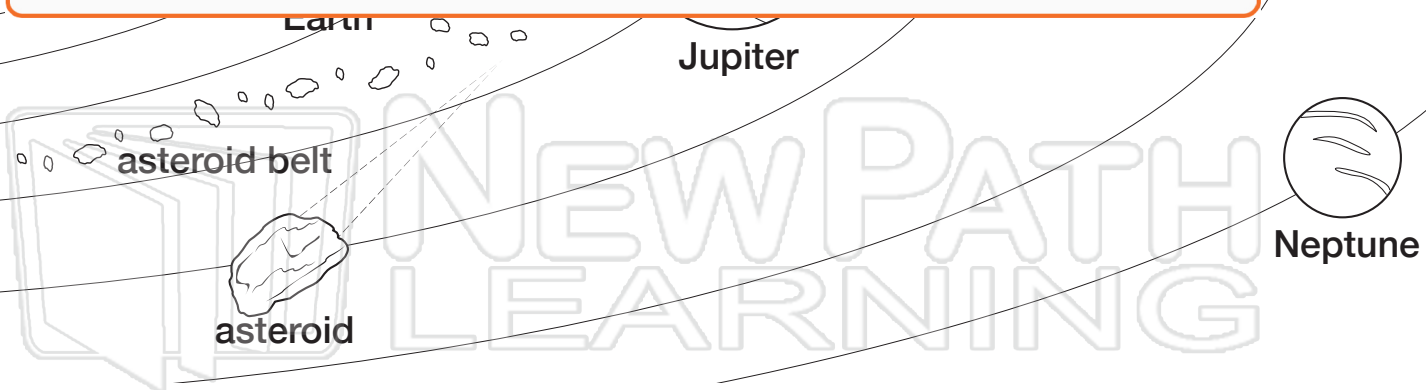
Through a process, called **accretion**, dust particles formed larger bodies that eventually became **planetesimals**. Close to the Sun, rocky planetesimals grew by accretion to become the **rocky planets**. In the outer reaches of the solar system, gases like hydrogen and helium accreted to rocky cores forming planets called **gas giants**.

Our **solar system** includes the **Sun**, **planets**, **moons** of planets, and other objects that revolve around the Sun. There are **8 known planets**, plus a **dwarf planet**, Pluto. The planets are divided into two groups called **inner** and **outer planets** based on their distances from the Sun.



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The **asteroid belt** is located between Mars and Jupiter. **Asteroids** are small pieces of rock that orbit around the Sun.



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A **planet** is a large body that **revolves** around the Sun in a path called an **orbit**. There are 8 known planets, plus a dwarf planet, Pluto.

The planets are divided into two groups called inner and outer planets based on their distance from the Sun. The **inner planets** include Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars. The **outer planets** include Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune.

The Inner Planets - also known as the **terrestrial planets** or as rocky planets. The terrestrial planets are Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars.

Mercury is the smallest of the terrestrial planets. It has no atmosphere.

Venus is the second planet from the Sun. It has a thick atmosphere consisting of carbon dioxide with some nitrogen and water.

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Earth is the only planet known to have liquid water on its surface. It has a thick atmosphere consisting of nitrogen and oxygen, and water vapor.

Mars has a very active volcanic history. There is growing evidence that there were large amounts of water on Mars at one time.



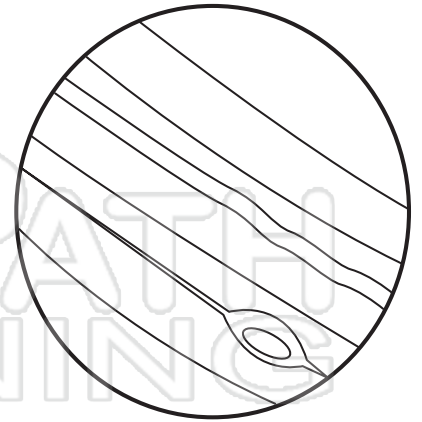


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The Outer Planets - Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune - are also referred to as the **gas giants** or **Jovian planets**.

Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system. It likely has a rocky core, but Jupiter is mostly made up of hydrogen and helium.



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Neptune is the gas giant furthest from the Sun. It has a rock and ice core surrounded by a large layer of ice and a layer of hydrogen and helium gas. The highest wind speeds in the solar system are on Neptune.



Until 2006, **Pluto** was considered the 9th planet from the Sun. **Pluto** is now considered a **dwarf planet** in a region of the solar system called **the Kuiper Belt**.

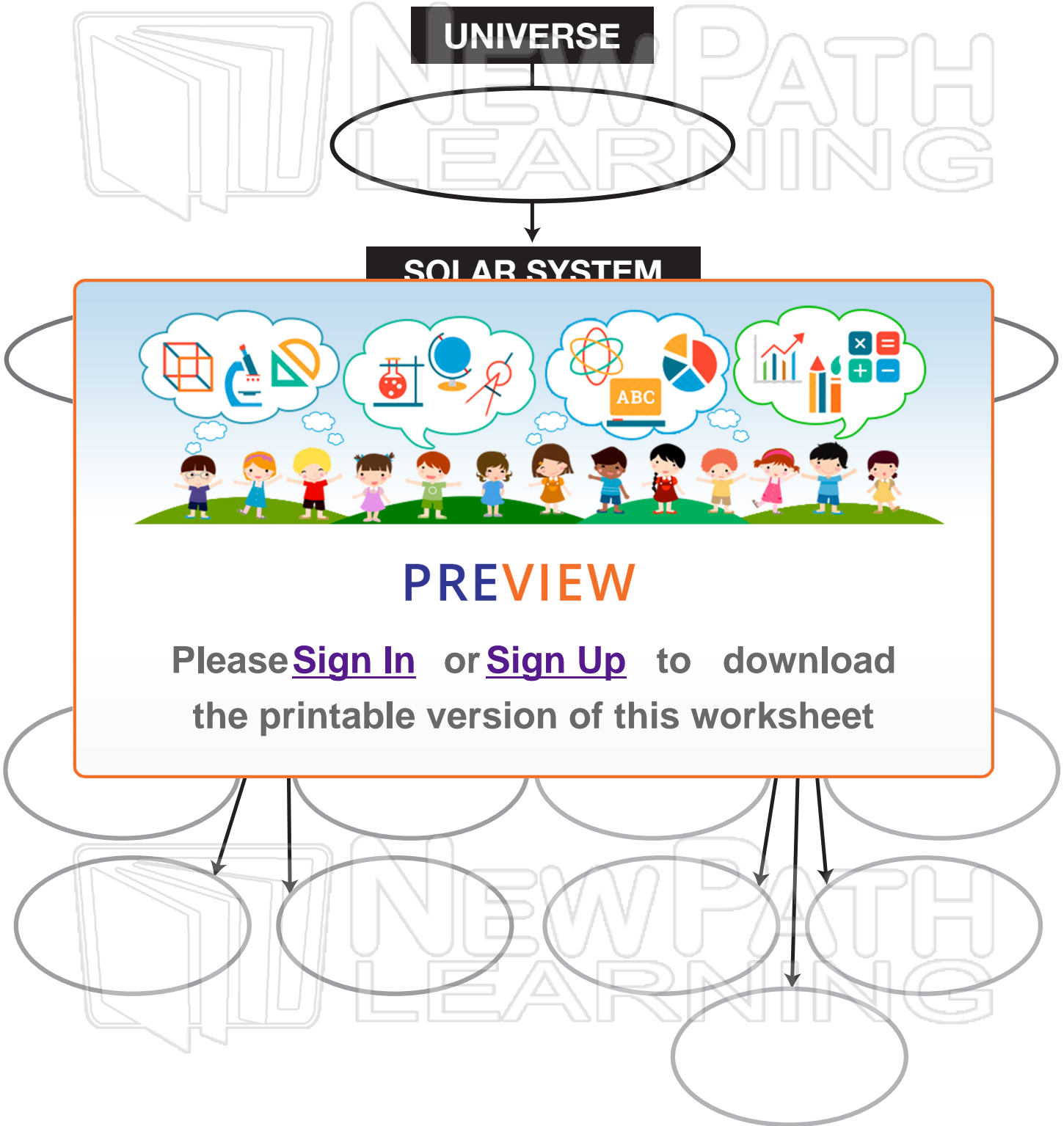


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Complete the graphic organizer by putting the correct terms in the corresponding oval. Choose from the list below:

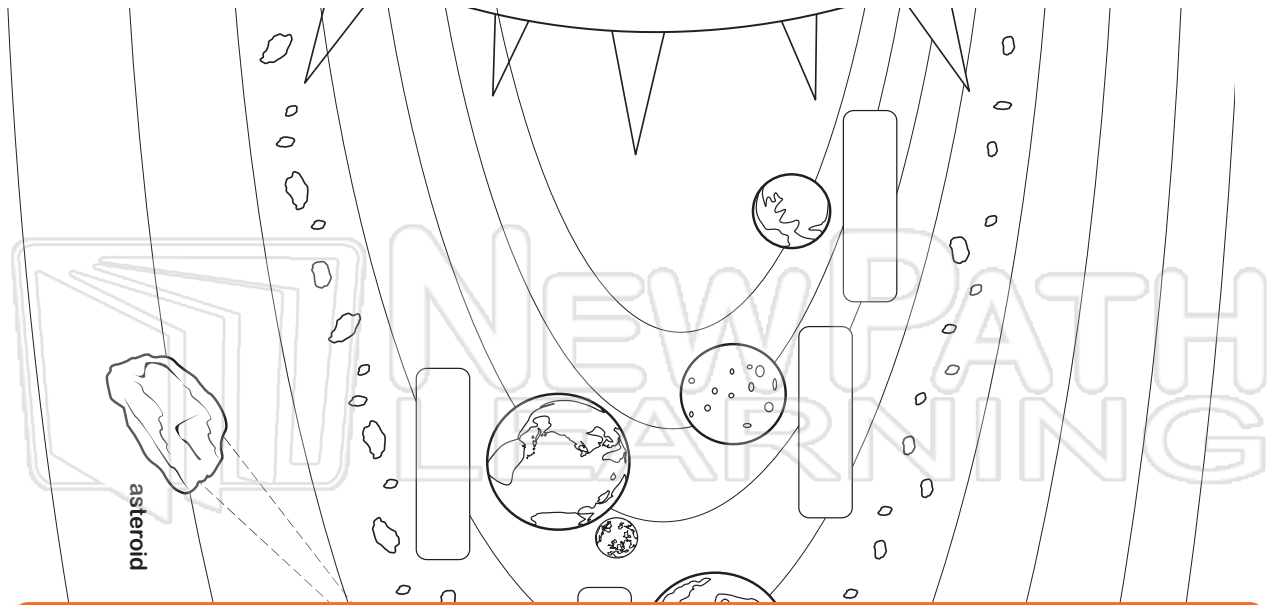
moons, galaxies, Sun, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Earth, Neptune, Uranus, Jupiter, Saturn, asteroids, plantesimals, dwarf planets, terrestrial planets, gas giants





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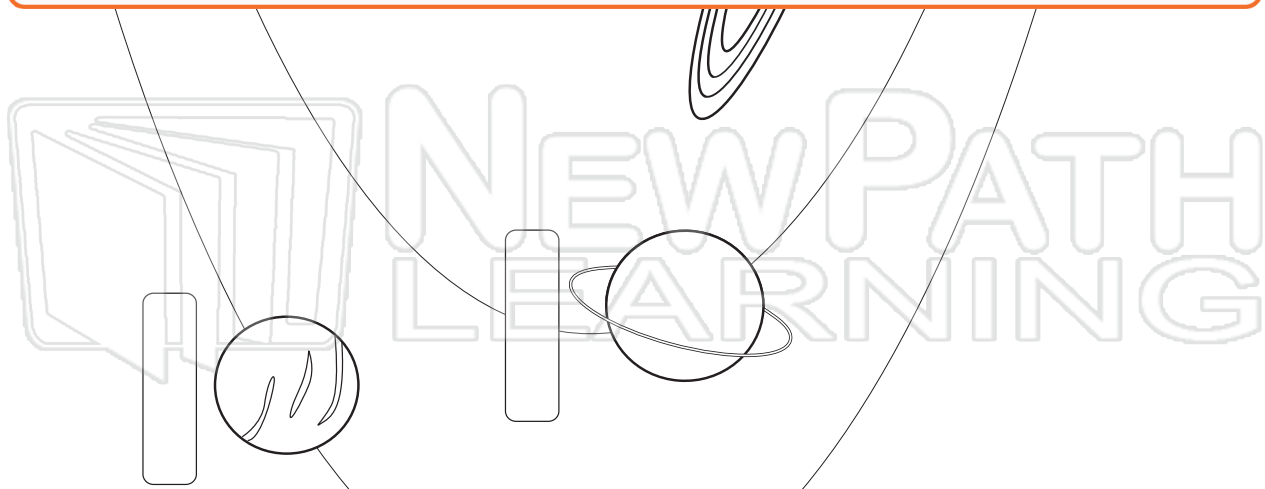


Color the Solar System. Label the planets.



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Our Solar System

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

Name the planets in order. Write a fact about each one.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____



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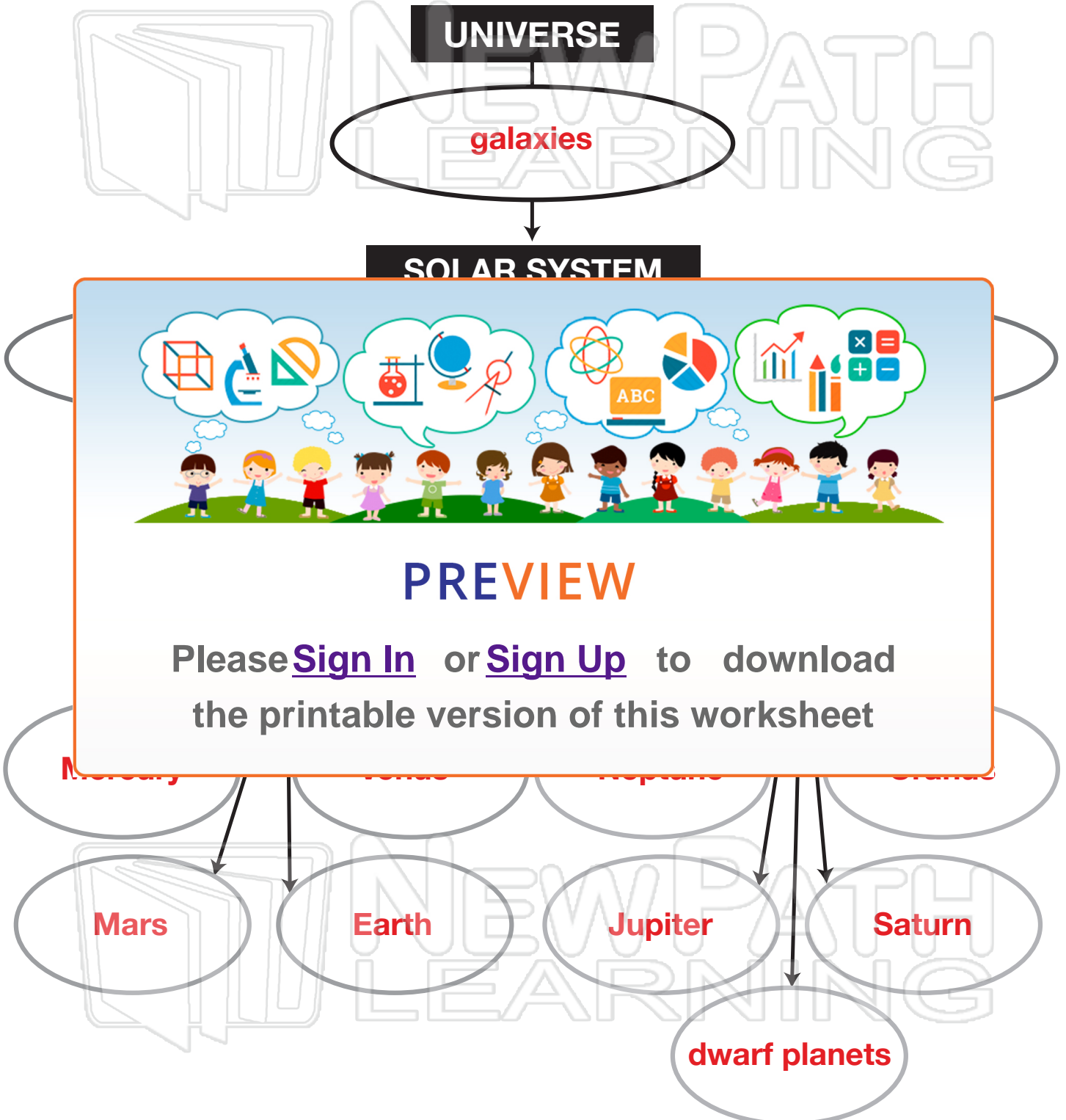


Our Solar System

Answer Key

Complete the graphic organizer by putting the correct terms in the corresponding oval. Choose from the list below:

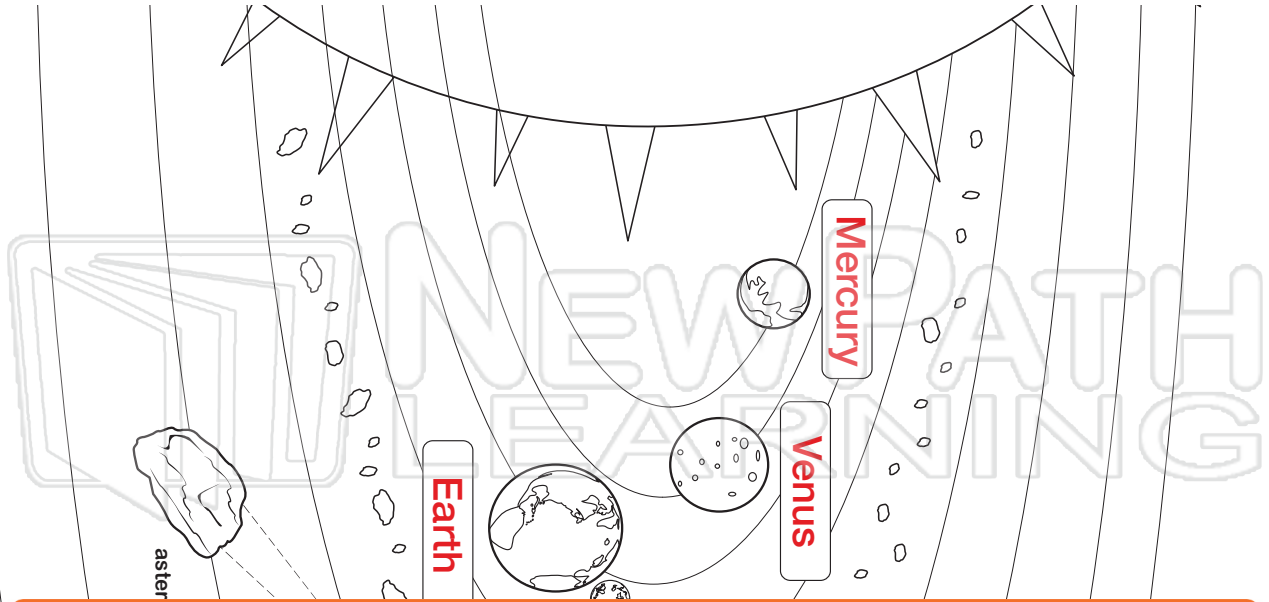
moons, galaxies, Sun, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Earth, Neptune, Uranus, Jupiter, Saturn, asteroids, plantesimals, dwarf planets, terrestrial planets, gas giants





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Color the Solar System. Label the planets.



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Answer Key

Name the planets in order. Write a fact about each one.

1. **Mercury. Open-ended.**

2. **Venus. Open-ended.**

3. **Earth. Open-ended.**

4.



5.

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6.

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7. **Uranus. Open-ended.**

8. **Neptune. Open-ended.**
