

the Rock Magnet

For Rockhounds Juniors, Teens & Greyhounds



MHVG+MS

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Earth - The Third Rock From The Sun!

FASTEN Your Seat Belt-- We are traveling through space on our **PLANETSHIP EARTH** around our star at 66,700 mph. Traveling with us is our close companion, our **MOON**. Our **Sun** is a yellow dwarf. Sometimes she has an outbreak of **SPOTS**. Without our Star there would be no life like us on Earth.

In the distance on a dark night we can see our sister planetship **VENUS**, she is one of the brightest in our sky. As we travel our **ORBIT** around our star we merrily spin and spin, just a wee bit off, tilted at 23 **PLUS** degrees. This tilt gives our ship variety--night and day and the four seasons (a planetary rock group?). Not to be lonesome, the **SUN** is tilted too. Around and around we go and we don't even feel dizzy. Are we on the top or bottom? What about the kangaroos in Australia are they upside down? This is very **MYSTIFYING**. Why don't we fall off this planet of rock and water. Why doesn't the **WATER** all drain off?

Our pilot tells us about this invisible force that keeps us from flying right off our planet into space forever, **GRAVITY!** Gravity gives us weight and holds us down depending on if we are on a smaller or larger planet or moon. To feel less weight visit the Moon or Mars. Venus and **Mercury** are just hot to visit comfortably.

There is another mysterious force too, **MAGNETISM**, which our planetship has, because we **SPIN** and we have an iron/nickel core. When the **SUN** sends out **A LOT** of energy, it activates our air **MOLECULES**. We are able to see beautiful curtains and streamers of **COLORED LIGHTS** at night, if we are near the north or south areas on our ship.

On our **365.26** day trip around our star we learn more and more about our Planetship Earth. We are the only planet in this solar system to have large amount of **WATER** - 70% water with the oceans an average depth of 2.5 miles. Two other **TERRESTRIAL** planets Venus and Mars have some atmosphere, but our planet has much more, made up of 78% Nitrogen and 21% Oxygen. Seen from outer space our Earth would be the brightest planet of the eight (nine-poor Pluto) due to the reflectivity of our **OCEANS**. We, the Earth, are the fifth largest planet in our **SOLAR SYSTEM**. We are told our space vehicle isn't really a **SPHERE** it is a oblate spheroid, we are a bit heavy around the middle! Our Planetship Earth is like no other known to astro-scientists! At the moment we have nowhere else to go if our Planetship runs out of energy, air, or water!

It is really something to have a ship that can carry **6 BILLION** tourists around the **SUN**. It takes a lot of supplies for this group. As we travel we have rain, sleet and snow with a volcanic eruption every now and then. Our rivers carry **MUDS** to the ocean building thousands of feet of sediment, oh yes, there is a hurricane or two. Sometimes our ship is knocked sideways with **ROCK** fracturing, the earth is shaking and quaking. This is why we wear our seat belts!

We have quite an interesting group of passengers. There are even people who love the Earth so much they are called **ROCKHOUNDS**. They get together, not only to study the **ROCKS** but the **MINERALS** in them. Some of this group look for the remains of ancient life called **FOSSILS**. We have learned there were times when mountains of ice covered the ship, now it seems our star is loving to melt our storage of ice. Our pilot guide tells of an ancient time when Mt. Vesuvius released lots of **VOLCANIC** ash that covered towns and passengers too.

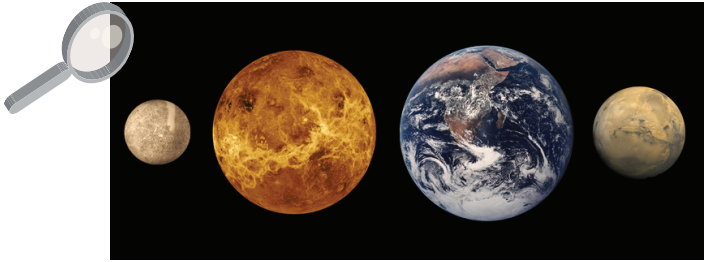
Volcanoes really like to be near edge of an ocean for it is there a part of our **PLANETSHIP** slips under to be recycled and freshened up. The new rock comes out of the volcanoes or **FISSURES** in the Earth. It seems this ship has quite a **RECYCLING** program. There are places where the old rock, **SUBDUCTS**, goes under other rock and new rock is born. We are told here is a special name for this program, it has something to do with plates.

This **PLATE** idea will need some investigation, perhaps in our next issue of the Rock Magnet. Until then, keep that seat belt fastened and take care of your **PLANETSHIP EARTH!**



“ Mrs. Rock ”

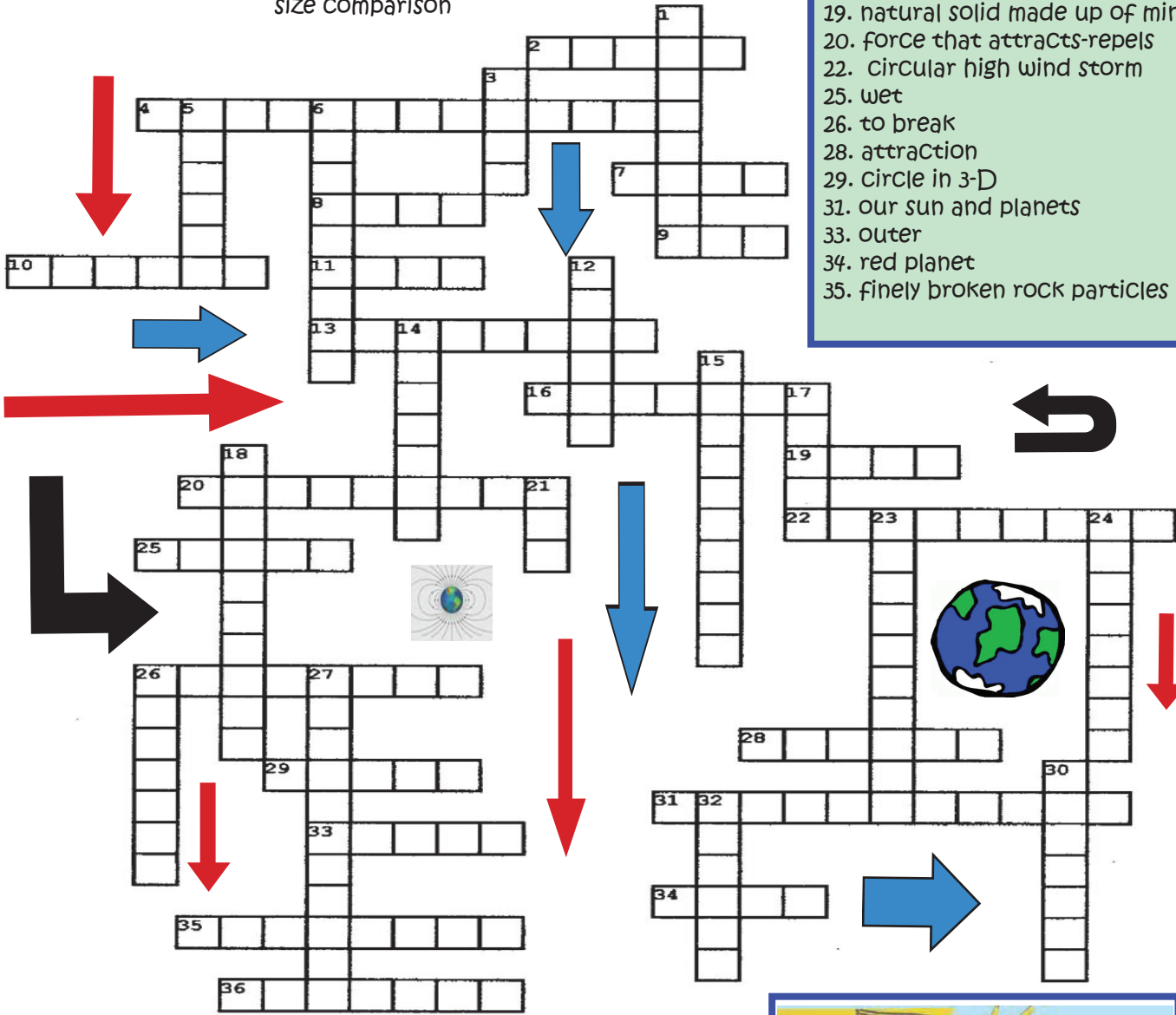
The Earth is bigger than Mercury, Venus and Mars!
Why is Venus called Earth's sister planet?



size comparison

Across:

- 2. sister planet
- 4. aurora
- 7. satellite
- 8. 365
- 9. our star
- 10. thinking, feeling life-form
- 11. not dead
- 13. 24 hours
- 16 around and around
- 19. natural solid made up of minerals
- 20. force that attracts-repels
- 22. circular high wind storm
- 25. wet
- 26. to break
- 28. attraction
- 29. circle in 3-D
- 31. our sun and planets
- 33. outer
- 34. red planet
- 35. finely broken rock particles



Down:

- 1. dark areas on our sun
- 3. out of vertical
- 5. 21 Percent
- 6. Conservation
- 12. crust lifeboats
- 14. holds down
- 15. our traveling vehicle
- 17. Our planet
- 18. Shake
- 21. 66,700
- 23. you and I
- 24. inert gas
- 26. remains of life
- 27. rocky
- 30. transportation
- 32. miles deep

