

RECOMMENDED GRADES: 1-8



TIME NEEDED: 20 MINUTES

Description

Students compete in teams to identify features of the solar system playing a beanbag toss game.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- engage in an introduction to the planets and their features
- work in teams to assess clues about planet features

Materials

- Beanbags (40 total; 10 of each color: red, blue, yellow, and green)
- Diving rings, various colors (8)
- Planet Feature Cards (40 total; 10 of each color)
- Timeline Cards (optional)
- Lanyards (40 total; 10 of each)

Preparation

5 minutes

- Place a diving ring on each planet image. Place 10 lanyards and 10 beanbags, in matching colors, on each corner of the map.

Tips/Modifications

Tips

- This game could be used as a pre-assessment activity or an assessment after studying the solar system and the map.
- This activity uses the same cards as the activity Race to the Planets.

Modification

- Reduce the number of cards used in the game for younger students.

Rules



Have students remove shoes before walking on the map.

DIRECTIONS

1. Have students walk around the map and look at map features, such as the planets and orbital paths. Review the name of each planet with students. Explain to students that they are going to play a game in which they compete in teams to correctly identify features of planets in the solar system.
2. Divide students into four groups by asking them to count off, one to four repeatedly, until all students have a number. All "1s" are one group, all "2s" are another group, and so on. Ask each group to stand in a different corner of the map. Each student should wear one lanyard and hold one beanbag.
3. Explain the rules of the game to students. Tell students that you will read a clue from the provided Planet Feature cards. Students will have 10 seconds to discuss, as a team, and decide which planet the clue is referencing. At the end of 10 seconds, you will say, "Reveal!" One member from the team will throw his or her beanbag onto the matching planet, based on the team's decision. Each student has the potential to win two points on their toss for their team: one point for correctly identifying which planet the clue is referencing and one point for getting their beanbag inside the diving ring on that planet. Reveal the correct answer, and ask teams to keep track of their own score. The next clue will be for the next team. With each round, a new student from each team will throw a beanbag.
4. There are four sets of Planet Feature Cards (red, yellow, blue, green), each with 10 cards. Have students play up to four rounds of this game (as time allows) and use one set of cards per round. Each clue has a hint that can be shared with students, depending on their age and ability. Answers to all clues on the Planet Feature Cards can be found in the Race to the Planets activity.
5. Have students tally the score at the end of each round. Record team totals if a whiteboard or chalkboard is available. At the end, have a large group discussion about the planets. What did the students find most surprising? Least surprising? What planet features would students like to learn more about?

EXTENDING THE LEARNING

- Play another round using the Timeline Cards. Have students line up on the side of the map, opposite the timeline. Still in teams, tell students that they will play using the same rules as before. However, this time they will be working to identify the years in which important moments of space exploration took place. Play as many games as you wish!