

EXPLORE SPACE IN YOUR DREAMS



Tell dad and mom what you learned today at **MS Dome**.
Before going to bed, ask your parents to read you the following story.

Mom and Dad: This is a curious, beautiful and interesting children's story which explains how the **solar system** was formed, how planets were formed, and what space is like in a fun way. This lovely story is aimed for children from 4 to 9 years old.

Outline:

1. Short story about how the Solar System was formed
2. Simple reading comprehension questions for children
3. Frequently asked questions

1. HOW DID THE SOLAR SYSTEM FORM?

Once upon a time, hundreds of thousands of years ago, the **Sun** was nothing more than a very large cloud formed by gas and dust that floated in space. **Mr. Sun** was very lonely, he had no friends to talk to.

One day, **Mr. Sun** decided to do something so he could find some company in such an empty space, so he called the oh-so-serious **Mrs. Gravity** to help him bring together his dust and gas, without leaving their cloud.



Mrs. Gravity felt sorry for **Mr. Sun** because he was so lonely, so she used all her strength to bring his dust and gas together more and more and more, until they merged and started to burn. **The Sun** then became a huge super flame that gave a lot of light and a lot of heat.

Right at the moment when **the Sun** began to burn, many pebbles shot out into empty space around them – and to prevent them from getting too far away from **the sun** so **Mr. Sun** wouldn't continue to be lonely – **Mrs. Gravity** left them floating in the space near the great fireball, with little bits that began to revolve around them, some closer and others further.



1. HOW DID THE SOLAR SYSTEM FORM?

Years after this happened, **Mr. Sun** still felt alone, so **Mrs. Gravity** decided to gradually gather all these floating pieces of stones, and formed 8 large balls of different colors and sizes, and so the planets were born!

Mr. Sun was very happy, and now all he had to do was to name his new friends:



– “You, who is closest to me, I will call you **Mercury**, since you move very, very fast.”

– “You, who is so funny, who always hides behind Mercury and flips upside down, we will call you **Venus**...”



“Oh! – he said, surprised when he saw the next planet full of water and dry areas – I’ll call you **Earth**!”

– “You, the next planet that I see, who is red, and smaller than the Earth– you will be called **Mars**.”



1. HOW DID THE SOLAR SYSTEM FORM?



– “And you, the one with stripes and a bunch of moons, I guess I will name you **Jupiter**. You are the biggest one, huh?”

– “And, you, the one surrounded by rings all around, your name will be **Saturn**.”



– “Hey, and why do you turn in such a strange way?” – asked **Mr. Sun**.

– “A comet hit me!” answered the planet.”

– “Well I’ll give you a very nice name, you’ll be **Uranus**.”



– “Oops, and you, are you doing all the way back there? You’re the last one... you turn so slowly around me, that it takes 160 years to turn around! And I see that you are blue, well I guess I will call you **Neptune**, then.”



1. HOW DID THE SOLAR SYSTEM FORM?

- Yet there was a last planet too, a little dwarf so small that **Mr. Sun** almost didn't see him! Yet, when he did
- he named him **Pluto**.

Because of Pluto's size, scientists would later argue about whether he was a planet or not, since he was a dwarf planet only the size of a moon – and they would take his name away... but then Nasa's Director and the International Astronomical Union (IAU), would give him his name as a planet right back at the end!



After meeting all his new planet friends, **Mr. Sun** was beamed with joy, but a little worried if anything bad could happen to them if they kept spinning and spinning, to which the oh-so-serious **Mrs. Gravity** responded: "Do not be afraid. I will be watching, and taking care of you, to make sure that nothing happens to you as you spin and spin."



And since then, the 9 planets have revolved around **Mr. Sun**, who has been happy ever since since he now has friends and is no longer lonely!

THE END

(Short version based on a story by Javier Martín Ferrero)



2. SIMPLE READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS FOR CHILDREN

- Reading comprehension is a capacity that children must practice, since it is very important in school. It is equally important for them to know how to read written words, as it is for them to have the ability to understand and interpret the general meaning of the text. Find out if the children have understood what they read by asking these simple questions.



1. Why did Mr. Sun call Mrs. Gravity?
2. Where did the pieces of stones come from?
3. What did the floating stones in space turn into?
4. Did Mrs. Gravity get all the planets to stay together, and in order?
5. What did Mr. Sun call his new friends? (With this question you will be challenging your children to learn the names of the planets.)
6. Who made the planets revolve around the Sun in space, for the rest of time?

3. CHILDREN'S FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



a. Why don't the stars fall?

This is a question children most frequently ask, so it may be a good time to explain the theories of gravity, but you can also explain it with a metaphor or analogy, i.e. the stars did not fall because they are held by invisible threads, much like Christmas tree ornaments.

b. Why don't planets hit each other as they move around?

We know that there are several planets and that they are spinning and moving. The reality is that planets do not hit each other because they move in different orbits, which is as if there were invisible traffic lanes in space.

c. Why can't we drive fast enough to go past the moon in our car?

When we drive our car beneath the light of a full moon to guide us, it might seem like we can pass the Moon if we just go fast enough. However, we will never be able to pass the moon – but not because of why you think! Though it seems like we can't reach it because it has a head start before us, the truth is that we can't reach the moon because of the movement it makes around Earth.

What does this mean?

- **SUPER FLAME:** Giant flame that burns.
- **COMET:** Astro that moves in space, orbits near the sun and has a tail with a halo of bright light.
- **ASTRO:** stars, planets, satellites, comets and asteroids are also stars, they are called celestial bodies.

