Our World in Space [6th grade]

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Unit: Our World in Space  
Grade: 6

Stage 1: Desired Results

Understandings

Students will understand that...
- All the components of our solar system and universe function as a system.
- Gravity is the force that holds our solar system and our universe together.
- Our sun and our solar system is one of hundreds of billions in our galaxy and our galaxy is one of hundreds of billions in our universe.
- As Technology (including telescopes, satellites, and space travel) expands so does our knowledge of our universe, but our knowledge and technology is limited.

Essential Questions
- How is our universe a “system”?
- Is our solar system unique?
- How do we know what’s out there?

Knowledge & Skill
- TEKS 6.5a Student identifies and describes a system that results from the combination of two or more systems such as in the solar system.
- TEKS 6.5b Student describes how the properties of a system are different from the properties of its parts.
- TEKS 6.13 The student knows the components of our solar system.
- TEKS 6.13a Students identify characteristics of objects in our solar system including the Sun, planets, meteorites, comets, asteroids, and moons.
- TEKS 6.13b Student describes types of equipment and transportation needed for space travel.

Stage 2: Assessment

A travel guide of the galaxy.

Students will conduct a web search to enrich their understanding of the components of the universe. Students will then create a travel brochure describing
- Description of the 3 destinations including how long it would take to get there
- Description of what travelers should expect to see during their journey
- Description of the type of space craft that would be necessary
Stage 3: Learning Activities

(Steps taken to get students to answer Stage 1 questions and complete performance task)

How is Our Universe a System?

Day 1: An Introduction to the Universe
- Students will come in to find the room decorated with various images of space. They will get to work on the warm up: What is out there in space?
- After the warm up the teacher will ask students to share their warm up responses and will probe students to think about things they already know about the universe.
- The teacher will introduce the advance organizer that will be used throughout the Unit.
- The teacher will show the Our Universe slide show with a discussion of gravity as the glue that holds the universe together.

Day 2: Systems within the Universe
- Students will complete the warm up: “What is a system?”
- Discussion of systems
- Think Pair Share: Based on what you already know and what you have already seen of the Universe, what kinds of systems do you think make up the universe?
- As a class we will read the beginning of section one. There will be a brief introduction of what a solar system is and how big it is.
- The class will go to the football field and recreate a model of the solar system to scale. We will discuss distances in terms of how far it is from San Antonio to Austin and other places that students have visited.

Day 3: Things to Know (Substitute)
- Students will complete the warm up: “What is the speed of light?”
- Before diving into our study, there are several terms that students need to know. Students will define the vocabulary words using their book. They will create a flip book with the word, the definition, and create an illustration of 10 of the words.
- If students complete the assignment they can begin working on their Exploratory Activity.

Day 4: Our Star: The Sun (Substitute)
- Students will complete the warm up: “What are the 6 layers of the Sun?”
- Students will view the video, “Savage Sun” and write down 3 facts and one question that will be addressed upon our return.
Day 5: Our Star: The Sun
- Students will complete the warm up: Would you weigh more on earth or on the sun? (page 545)
- The class will briefly review the relationship between mass and weight and why students would weigh more on the sun.
- Students will review their video notes and share out some of the things they learned and will have an opportunity to ask questions about the things they saw in the video.
- As a class, students will read chapter 20 section 1, “The Sun: Head of the Family” and “Solar Activity”
- In pairs, students will complete student notes on the sun. (From Provided Unit Resources)
- To assess understanding of basic facts of stars- namely, the sun, and the universe as a system students will take an open notes quiz.

What makes our Solar System Unique?

Day 6: Our Planets
- Students will complete the warm up: “What are the 4 inner planets?”
- Students will read the section 2 in pairs using the say something model and will create a solar system completing notes on each planet:
  - On the planet shaped sheets students will fill in Data tables on the front and will take notes on the back. They will color the planets appropriately and string them together to create a model of our solar system.

Day 7 and 8: Our Planets Continued
- Students will complete the warm up “What are the four outer planets?” and “What is Saturn known for.
- Teacher Student Check in- Check in to see where students are, and what interesting they have learned about the planets
- And will continue working on their solar systems.
- Debrief- See where students are, and ask questions based on where they are.

Day 9: A Day on Another Planet
- Students will complete the warm up, “How can you remember the order of the planets from the sun?”
- Students will put their planets with their notes together to create their own solar system. Then we will discuss how the distance from the sun and their rotation affects the conditions on the planets
- Pairs of students will be assigned a planet and will describe a day on that planet using their book and provided recourses. Students will then present their discoveries to another pair of students.

Day 10: Other Bodies in Space: Comets, Asteroids, and Meteorites
- Warm up: “Look at figure 34 on page 560. What is the region between mars and Jupiter where many solar bodies can be found?”
- Students will be coming back from spring break and will need a review, so the class will review for about 5-10 minutes. Students can use their solar systems to answer teacher questions?
  - What would a day be like on mars? What would you expect to find there?
  - What would it be like to visit Venus?
If you visited one of the outer planets would you be able to land on it like you would land on Mars or Mercury?

- The teacher will explain that between the inner planets and outer planets we find the asteroid belt. Asteroids are small rocky bodies of course small is relative. There are some asteroids like Ceres that are so big that some astronomers classify them as dwarf planets (like Pluto). Today we will be discussing some of the smaller solar bodies such as Asteroids, meteorites, and comets.
- As a class students will read pages 559-561 and the teacher will provide extra information about these bodies.
- Students will work in pairs to identify whether each description in the Small Space Bodies notes applies to Asteroids, Meteorites, Comets, all, or some of these space bodies.
- Next the class and each student will create a Venn diagram using new knowledge of these solar bodies.
- Students will complete questions independently about asteroids, meteorites and comets:
  - Why is the study of comets, asteroids, and meteorites important in understanding the formation of our solar system?
  - Why do comets 2 tails often point in different directions?

Day 11: Other Bodies in Space: Moons
- Students will complete the warm up “Which planets have moons?” (page 555)
- Students will read and discuss The first part of Chapter 20 Section 3 “Moons and Other Bodies” as a class will watch the video “Moon Dance” this video describes the formation of the moon and how the moon affects Earth.
- In pairs students will read about the other planets moons and complete the student notes “Moons”
- Students will complete the questions:
  - Why does the moon have more impact craters than Earth?
  - How does the moon affect Earth?
  - What makes the relationship between Pluto and Charon unique?
  - What are 2 properties of Neptune’s moon Triton that make it unusual?
  - How does knowing the age of a lunar rock help astronomers estimate the age of a planet?

Days 12-13: Web Search

How do we know what’s out there?

Day 14: History of Space Travel and Technology
- Warm Up: What does NASA stand for and why was it founded?
- The teacher will ask students what they know about NASA and space travel.
  - Have we ever traveled to the edge of our galaxy?
  - Have we ever been to Jupiter?
  - Have we ever walked on Mars?
- The teacher will present the Space Travel Slide Show including the Video “Space Exploration: Rockets:” as Students complete student notes
- The teacher will show a short video and discuss limitations to space travel.

Day 15: Space Travel Jigsaw
- Warm Up: What is a space probe?
• Students will complete a Jigsaw Cooperative Learning Activity to learn about different missions involving space travel. Students will be in groups of 4 and will become specialists in
  o Missions to the Moon
  o Missions to Mars
  o Missions to Venus
  o Missions to the Outer Planets
  o Comets and future Missions

• Students will then answer questions about these missions and about space travel and technology.

Day 16: Buffer Day
Day 17-18: Travel Brochure
Day 19: Review For Exam
Day 20: Exam
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<td>28 Day 2</td>
<td>1 Day 3</td>
<td>2 Day 4</td>
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<td>An Introduction</td>
<td>Systems Within</td>
<td>Getting to know</td>
<td>Our Star: The</td>
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<td>7 Day 7</td>
<td>8 Day 8</td>
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<td>Buffer Day Quiz</td>
<td>Day 6 Introduction to our Solar System</td>
<td>Our Planets</td>
<td>Our Planets A day on Another Planet</td>
<td>Immigration day</td>
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<td>21 Day 11</td>
<td>22 Day 12</td>
<td>23 Day 13</td>
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<td>Other Bodies in Space Cont.</td>
<td>Other Bodies in Space Cont.</td>
<td>Computer Lab</td>
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<td>A day on Another Planet</td>
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<td>Half Days- Conferences</td>
<td>Web Search</td>
<td>Performance Assessment</td>
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<td>27 Day 15</td>
<td>28 Day 16</td>
<td>29 Day 17</td>
<td>30 Day 18</td>
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<td>Exploration Jigsaw</td>
<td>Buffer Day</td>
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<td>3 Day 20</td>
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<td>5 Buffer Day</td>
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Unit Exam
Pretend that you are a travel agent that provides your clients with a special kind of vacation. Suppose you have the ability to set up trips into outer space! These kinds of trips would require special technology, may require a different kind of time frame, and would provide vacationers with an out of this world experience!

You are going to use your knowledge of space to create a travel brochure that describes the trip plan that you are providing to your clients.

You will need to...
- Create and illustrate a cover for the brochure
- Select three destinations and describe what the traveler will find when they reach this destination and provide illustrations.
  - Possible Destinations may include other planets or dwarf planets, moons, comets, asteroids, or stars (including the sun).
- Describe and illustrate the type of technology that will be necessary
  - How fast will it have to travel?
  - How long will it take you to get to each destination?
- What can travelers expect to experience or see along the way?
  - Will they see comets, asteroids, meteorites, stars, black holes, other planets… etc.?
  - What will it be like in space?

You will be graded on:

Completion of Colored Illustrations (10 points)

Description of three solar bodies that will be your Destinations. (60 Points)

Description of necessary Technology and time span (15 points)

Description what travelers should expect to see or Experience along the way (15 points)
## Planning a Trip that is OUT OF THIS WORLD!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destinations (60%)</th>
<th>Technology (15%)</th>
<th>Experiences (15%)</th>
<th>Illustrations (10%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50-60—I creatively and accurately described the three destinations that passengers will make during their space cruise. I clearly show my understanding of space is in these descriptions.</td>
<td>10-15—I have described the type of space craft that would be necessary including how fast the space craft would have to travel and how long it would take me to my destinations. The information is accurate.</td>
<td>10-15—I have used my creativity and imagination to accurately describe what passengers will see and experience during their trip.</td>
<td>8-10—I have neatly and creatively illustrated my brochure cover, and provided illustrations for each of my 3 destinations, and of the space craft or the technology described in my brochure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49—I have described the three destinations that passengers will be making accurately, but some of my explanations did not show my understanding of space.</td>
<td>7-9—I have described the type of space craft that would be necessary including how fast it would have to travel but the amount of time it would take to get to my destinations is not accurate.</td>
<td>7-9—I have described what passengers will see and experience during their trip but some of the information may be incomplete or inaccurate.</td>
<td>5-7—I have illustrated my brochure cover, and provided illustrations for each of my 3 destinations, and of the space craft or the technology described in my brochure, but some of these pictures may not be neat or colored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-39—I described my destinations, but some of my descriptions were inaccurate or incorrect.</td>
<td>4-6—I have described the type of space craft that would be necessary</td>
<td>4-6—I have described what passenger will see during their trip but most of my description is incorrect or inaccurate</td>
<td>3-4—I have illustrated my brochure cover, and provided illustrations for each of my 3 destinations, and of the space craft or the technology described in my brochure but have not colored or completed many of my illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-19—The descriptions I provided were inaccurate or incomplete</td>
<td>0-3—The description of my space craft and technology is incomplete</td>
<td>0-3—My description of what passengers should expect is incomplete and inaccurate.</td>
<td>0-2—I have not completed the illustrations for my travel brochure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our World in Space Quiz I

1. What is a system?

2. How is our universe a system made up of many systems?

3. Label the diagram of the sun:

4. Describe the process the sun uses to convert matter to energy ($E=mc^2$).

5. In which layer does this process occur?
Facts to include in Venn Diagram- Those in Italics are NOT listed in Student Sheet

**COMETS**
- Small body of ice, rock and cosmic dust loosely packed together
- Formed in cold outer solar system
- *The solid center is called the nucleus*
- *When they get close to the sun, the solar radiation causes the heat and dust to glow like a long tail.*
- They may have 2 tails-
  - Dust tail is from heat and dust and can stretch millions of Kilometers in space. It stretches out behind the nucleus.
  - Ion Tail is from electrically charged particles and always points away from the sun because of the solar wind.
- Has a large elliptical orbit around the sun

**ASTROIDS**
- Can range in size from a few meters to more than 900 km in diameter.
- *Many of the larger ones are spherical*
- Located in the Asteroid belt
- The ones located in the outer regions of the asteroid belt have dark reddish brown to black surfaces and may be rich in organic material
- The ones in the middle of the asteroid belt have dark gray surfaces and may be rich in iron
- The ones toward the inside of the asteroid belt (closest to the sun) have light gray surfaces and most likely have stoney or metallic composition.

**METEOROIDS**
- Are like asteroids, but much smaller.
- Are most likely pieces of asteroids
- When they fall to Earth’s surface they are called meteorites
- When they hit the Earth’s atmosphere they surface melts and lets off light that looks like shooting stars. We call these bright streaks meteors.
- There are three major types of composition- stoney, metallic, and stoney-iron

**METEOROIDS AND COMETS**
- Can cause what looks like bright streaks in the sky
- *Contribute to Meteor Showers (Dust and debris from comets and clusters of meteoroids cause meteor showers)*

**ASTROIDS AND METEOROIDS**
- Small rocky body that revolves around the sun.
- Have different compositions
- Can have odd shapes

**ALL THREE**
- *Small Solar Body*
- Orbits the Sun
- Made up of material that was left over from when our solar system formed
- *May provide us with information about the early solar system*
Small Solar Bodies: Comets, Asteroids, Meteoroids

Write the appropriate letter or letters next to each statement
Does the statement refer to...

A. Comets    B. Asteroids    C. Meteoroids

Example:
_A, B, C_ May provide us with information about the early solar system.

1. _______ Orbits the Sun.
2. _______ Can cause what looks like bright streaks in the sky.
3. _______ Small rocky body that revolves around the sun.
4. _______ Located in the Asteroid Belt.
5. _______ Are like asteroids, but much smaller.
6. _______ Small body of rock, ice, and cosmic dust loosely packed together.
7. _______ Made up of material that was left over from when our solar system formed.
8. _______ May have 2 tails: the Dust tail that stretched out behind it up to millions of kilometers and the Ion tail that is made of electrically charged particles and always points away from the sun because of solar winds.
9. _______ Have a large elliptical orbit.
10. _______ The ones toward the outer region of the asteroid belt are a dark reddish brown to black and may contain organic material; the ones in the middle are dark gray and may be rich in iron; the ones on the inside are light gray and may have a stony or metallic composition.
11. _______ Three major compositions are stony, metallic, and stony-iron.
12. _______ Can have odd shapes.
13. _______ When they fall to earth they are called meteorites.
14. _______ When they burn up in Earth’s atmosphere and create light they are called meteors.
15. _______ Have different compositions.
16. _______ Are most likely pieces of asteroids.
17. _______ Can range in size from a few meters to more than 900 km in diameter.
18. _______ Formed in the cold outer regions of the solar system.

19. Why is the study of comets, asteroids, and meteorites important in understanding the formation of our solar system?

20. Why do comets 2 tails often point in different directions?
Comets, Asteroids, and Meteoroids
THE MOONS

1. Why does the moon have more impact craters than Earth?

2. How does the moon affect Earth?

3. What makes the relationship between Pluto and Charon unique?

4. What are 2 properties of Neptune’s moon Triton that make it unusual?

5. How does knowing the age of a lunar rock help astronomers estimate the age of a planet?
Astronomy Web Search

You guys have asked some GREAT questions over the past few weeks. Here is your opportunity to discover the answers and discover astronomy on your own!

Use the internet to answer the following questions. When you are finished feel free to keep exploring other topics, or check out the cool links I’ve provided at the bottom of the page.

Black Holes

http://imagine.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/science/know_l2/black_holes.html

1. What is a black hole?

   ANSWER THE QUESTION HERE

2. What would happen if you tried to enter a black hole?

   ANSWER THE QUESTION HERE

Pluto

http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/14489259/

1. Why isn’t Pluto considered a planet anymore?

   ANSWER THE QUESTION HERE

2. What is it considered now?

   ANSWER THE QUESTION HERE
Telescopes- How do they work?

http://www.howstuffworks.com/telescope1.htm

1. What are the two types of telescopes?

ANSWER THE QUESTION HERE

2. Label the diagram below and describe what happens in each part of the telescope

Rockets

http://www.howstuffworks.com/rocket.htm

1. Why is space exploration difficult?

ANSWER THE QUESTION HERE

2. How are rocket engines different from regular engines like the ones in our cars?

ANSWER QUESTION HERE
The Universe

http://math.ucr.edu/home/baez/physics/Relativity/GR/centre.html

1. Where is the center of the universe? (Or is there one?)

   ANSWER QUESTION HERE

2. How is the universe like a balloon that is being blown up?

   ANSWER QUESTION HERE

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Check out these cool web sites when you are done

NASA’s “Imagine the Universe” page is put together by the Goddard Space Flight Center and has lots of cool information:

http://imagine.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/science/science.html

Explore some of your curiosities about physics and astronomy at URC’s FAQ Page:

http://math.ucr.edu/home/baez/physics/index.html

Fine our more about our solar system, and space exploration at Kid’s Astronomy. You can also play some cool games!

http://www.kidsastronomy.com/
Missions to the Moon

The Luna Program was one of two lunar exploration programs conducted by the Soviet Union. This was a very long program that ran from 1959-1976. The program collected data about the moon for scientific purposes and to help plan future missions to the moon. In 1966 the Soviet Union put the first space probe on the moon, the Luna 9. During the next 10 years the Soviet Union and the United States made more than 30 lunar missions to collect data and take picture.

In 1994, the United States launched the probe Clementine. Clementine was the first of a new class of small, lightweight spacecrafts that was designed to remain in space for longer periods. The spacecraft was put into orbit around the moon and mapped the moon’s surface. Clementine returned valuable information to earth including possible evidence of water at the south pole of the moon. Anywhere else on the moon, sunlight would cause any ice or water to vaporize.

The most well known Lunar Missions are the Apollo Missions. On July 16, 1969, at 8:32 am, the United States landed two men, on the surface of the moon in Apollo 11. Neil Armstrong was the first man on the moon and spoke the famous words, “One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind as he stepped out onto the surface of the moon. Many experiments were conducted and many moon rocks were taken back to Earth to be studied in labs.

http://www.lpi.usra.edu/expmoon/
Holt Science and Technology for 6th Grade

What are the key points you will bring back to your group to teach them about missions to the moon?
Missions to Mars
Missions to Venus
Missions to the Outer Planets
Comets and future Missions
Space Exploration Q&A