

Objective:

Students will learn that every planet has distinctive features and characteristics.

Arkansas State Standards Addressed:

Speaking and Listening

SL.4.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or *recount* an experience to support main ideas or *themes*.

Writing

W.4.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

Learning Goals:

Students will...

Understand that every planet has different features that make it distinctive	
Know the different features and characteristics of planets	Do a creative writing and art exercise that is then shared with the class

Materials Needed:

- *Space: Facts At Your Fingertips* by DK Publishing. Any book that showcases features of planets to show as an example would work.
- Lined writing paper
- Pencils
- Blank white paper
- Colored pencils/crayons/markers for illustration

Procedures:

1. To begin, prompt students to name the planets in our solar system. Next, ask if there is anyone who has an interesting fact to share about a planet other than Earth. After getting responses, tell students that they will be learning some interesting facts about other planets and then they will get the chance to write about and illustrate their own planet.
2. Using the *Space* pocket book, share with students the spread on pages 38-39, which covers the planets Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars. As you share the facts on this page with the class, point out the many different things that the book describes: the planet's atmosphere, the soil, temperature, the distance from the sun, the diameter, the year and day length, etc. Make a list of these features on a whiteboard or Smart Board. Do the same thing for pages 40-43. If under time constraints, just note one or two interesting facts about each planet instead of reading all the information. Showcase some of the different landforms found on planets on pages 44-53, then flip to page 58 and note that each planet has a different number of moons.
3. After going through the book, tell students that they will be pretending that they discovered a brand new planet. In order to share their discovery with everyone, they will be naming the planet and writing a description, including details such as color, size, year and day length, distance from the sun, and descriptions of the planet's climate, temperature, atmosphere,

and landforms. Tell students that they can be as creative as they like and emphasize the importance of using rich descriptive words. After they've completed their writing and had it checked by you for completeness, they will then create an illustration of their planet.

4. Give students approximately 30 minutes to work (or however much time you have). After they've completed their writing and illustration, each student can have the opportunity to share their description with the class.

Explore Space Exhibit Information:

Explore Space: A Cosmic Journey, a traveling exhibition for libraries, is part of the STAR Library Education Network (STAR_Net) led by the National Center for Interactive Learning at the Space Science Institute. Exhibit partners include the American Library Association, the Lunar and Planetary Institute, and Afterschool Alliance. Explore Space is supported through a grant from the National Science Foundation.

