



Name: _____

Mars: The Red Planet

Mars is the fourth planet from the Sun and one of Earth's closest neighbors in space! Mars is often called the "Red Planet" because it has a rusty red color. This color comes from the iron in the rocks and soil on Mars. Let's explore what makes Mars so interesting!

Mars is much colder than Earth. It's also a rocky planet with deserts, mountains, and canyons. Mars has huge dust storms that can cover the whole planet! Mars has a thin atmosphere, which means there isn't much air, and it wouldn't be safe for humans to breathe there.

Mars is home to Olympus Mons, the tallest volcano and mountain in the solar system! It's about three times as tall as Mount Everest on Earth. Imagine climbing that mountain!



Olympus Mons

Mars has two small moons named Phobos and Deimos. These moons are very small and look like big, lumpy rocks. Phobos and Deimos are much smaller than our Moon on Earth, but they orbit around Mars just like our Moon orbits around Earth.

Scientists are very interested in Mars because it has signs that water might have existed there long ago. They've found dry riverbeds and deep canyons that suggest water once flowed on the surface. Today, most of the water on Mars is frozen as ice, especially at the poles, which are the very top and bottom parts of the planet.

Since Mars is far away and very cold, humans haven't visited it yet. But scientists send robots and rovers to explore it! These robots, like Curiosity and Perseverance, travel around Mars, take pictures, and collect information to send back to Earth. Rovers help us learn more about Mars and whether it could ever support life.

A day on Mars, called a sol, is just a little longer than a day on Earth. A sol is about 24 hours and 39 minutes. Mars also has seasons like Earth, but they're twice as long because Mars takes almost 687 Earth days to orbit the Sun.



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Fun Facts About Mars

Mars is about half the size of Earth.

The temperature on Mars can get as cold as -80 degrees Fahrenheit!

Mars has polar ice caps like Earth, made of frozen water and carbon dioxide.

1. Why does Mars have a red color? _____

2. Why do scientists think water might have existed on Mars? _____

3. Create and answer a question from the passage.

Question: _____

Answer: _____
