

Can-U-Read

Hanna Visits the Solar System

My name is Hanna and I am going to visit Mercury.

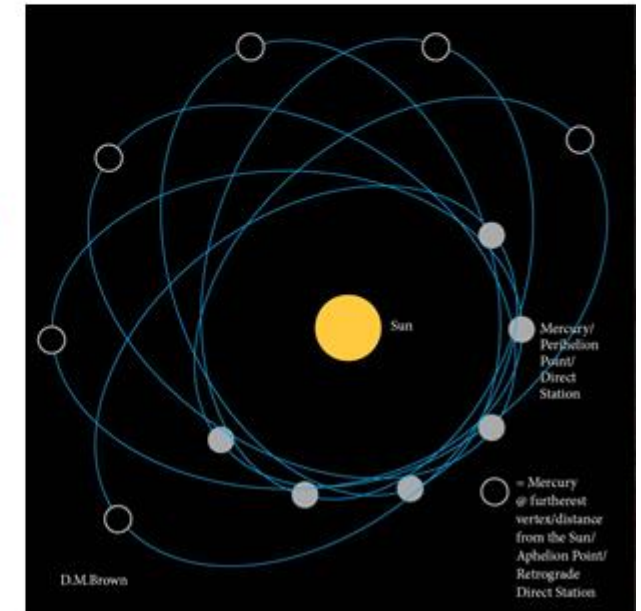
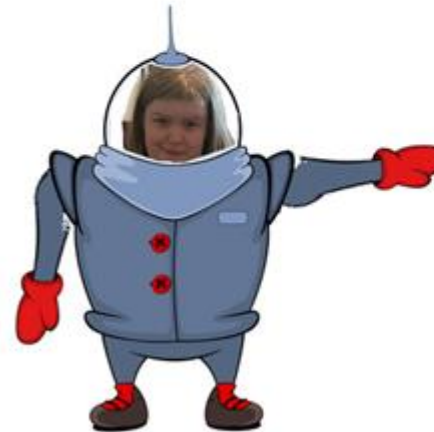
It is the second hottest planet because it is the closest to the sun. I'm not scared because I have a great space suit.

Mercury is also the smallest planet. It whips around the sun once every 88 days, but it only turns around very slowly.

If I lived on Mercury, I would be 39 years old, but I would have only seen 20 sunrises in my whole life.

Mercury processes around the sun very quickly. My Mercury birthday was in the summer, but now, my birthday is in the winter.

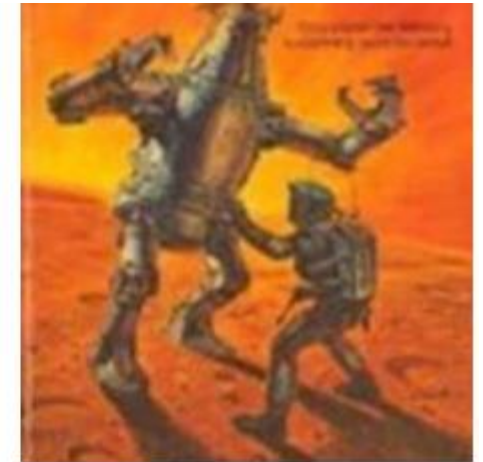
Mercury has no water, no oceans, no clouds. Anything off the rock is blasted away by the sun.



One of the stories about Mercury says that people could only live there if they had robots to help.

Isaac Asimov wrote about people living in the warm twilight zone. The hot daytime of Mercury would melt rockets, but the cold nighttime would freeze people. People could only live where the two meet.

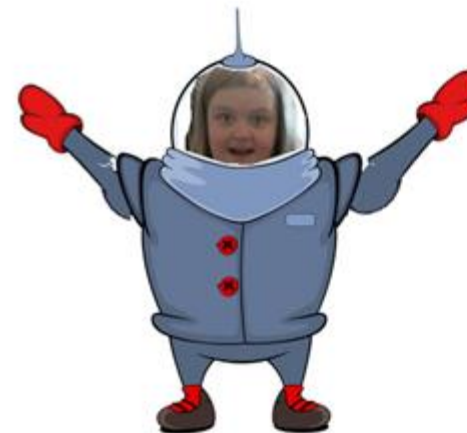
I would have to live in a moving city. It would be like a big tank moving over the face of Mercury.



Next, I want to see Venus. I'm actually a little scared because it is the hottest planet.

Venus is the evil twin of Earth. It is about the same size and covered in clouds. But the clouds are trapping all the heat from the sun. So Venus is super hot—hot enough to melt a car into a puddle of metal.

On Venus I would be 15 years old and I could drive a car... if it didn't melt first. In my whole life I would only have seen 30 days on Venus.



The first people thought Venus was very beautiful because it was so shiny at night. Later we figured out that there were thick clouds all over the planet. People thought it would be dark on Venus, like living in a perpetual thunderstorm.

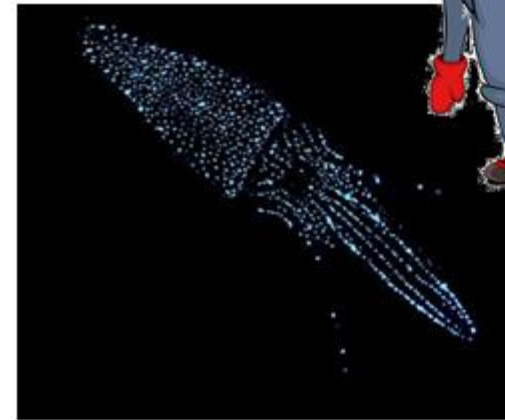
The only times that people sent rockets to Venus, they melted in just a minute. Some people think that we could live there if we could float far enough above the surface.



This is Earth. I don't want to visit here. I've already been here. It's boring!

But... Earth has lots of things that no other planet has. Hot deserts, cold mountains, flat grasslands, dense jungle, deep oceans, and beautiful waves. Animals live in all those places... but nowhere else in the solar system.

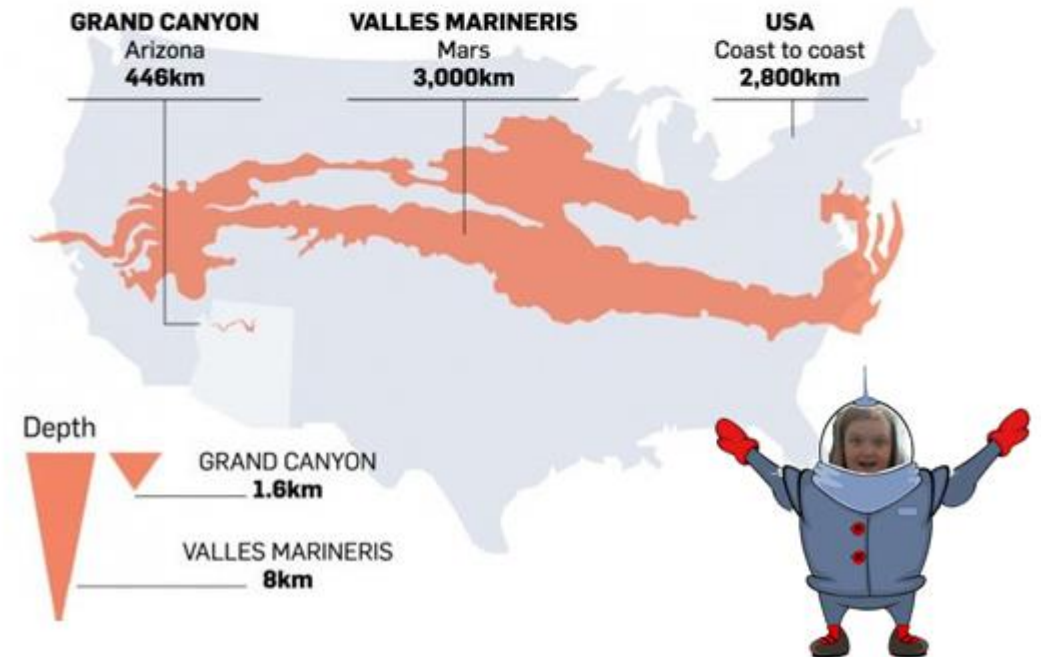
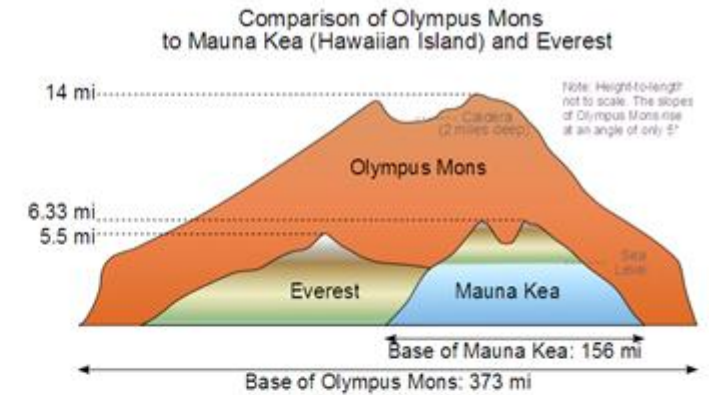
I guess it's not so boring after all.



I would like to see Mars and especially Olympus Mons. That is the biggest mountain in the solar system! Mars also has the largest canyon.

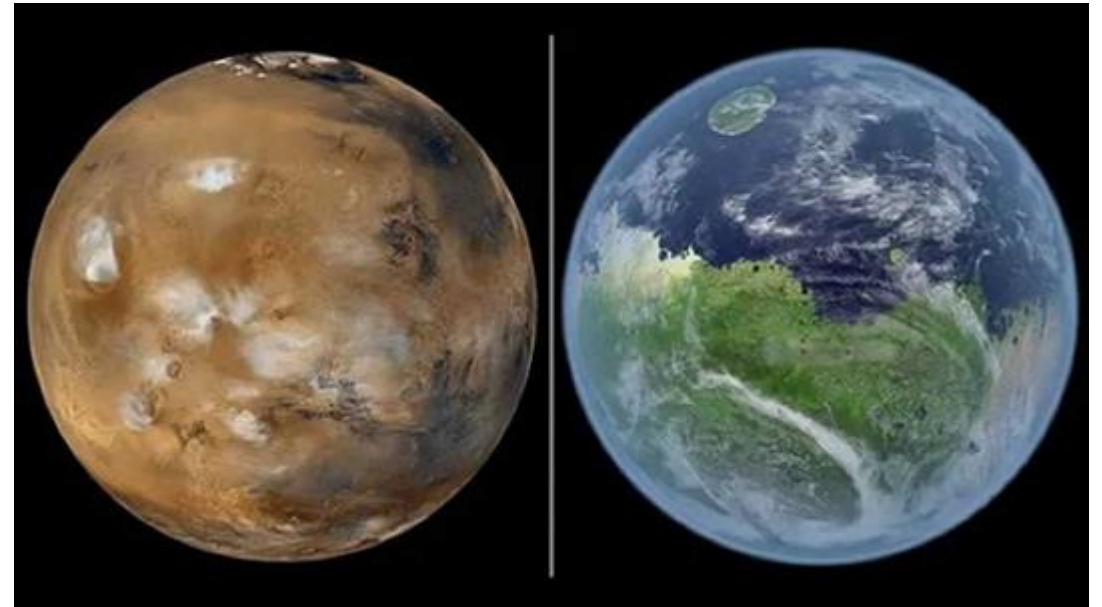
Earth is bigger than Mars, but the mountains and canyons on Mars are MUCH bigger.

Days on Earth and Mars are almost the same, but on Mars I would be just 5 years old. I'm practically a baby!



Many people have talked about living on Mars. It is a smaller planet, but it is *just* livable. Maybe not now, but if we made some changes, we could live there.

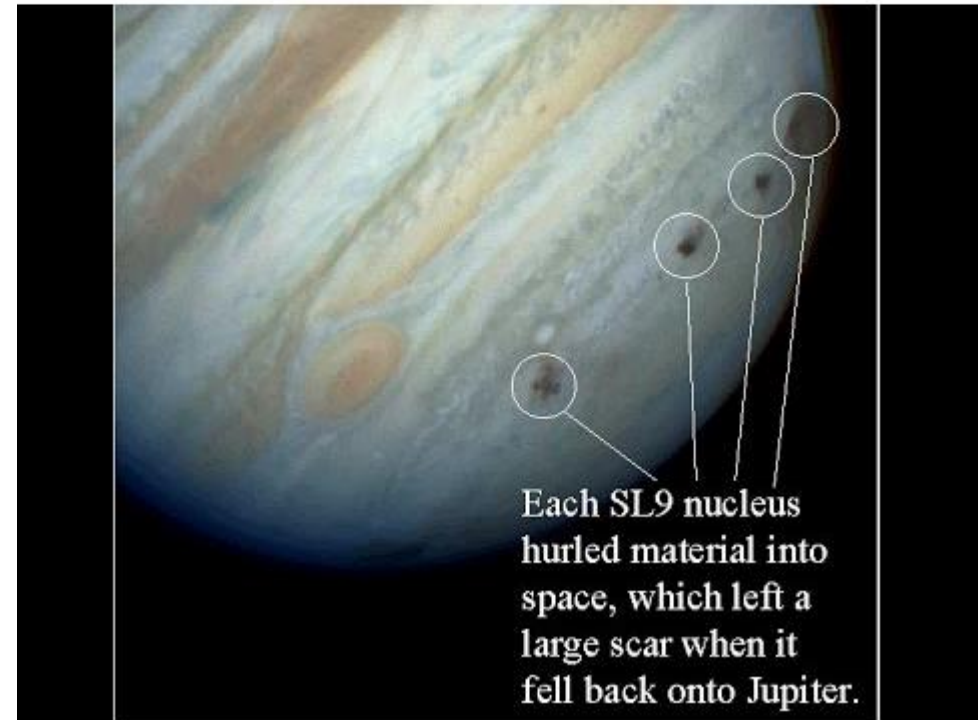
If we heated Mars up, the water would melt, and we would have oceans. If the air were thicker, we would have clouds and rains. If plants could grow there, we could have oxygen. Maybe not now, but we could live on the red planet.



Jupiter is the biggest planet. It's like a big brother protecting Earth. Any rocks coming through have to pass by Jupiter. Most of them leave again very quickly.

Once we saw pieces of rock hit Jupiter. It made little storms, but then Jupiter just kept going. The biggest and oldest storm EVER is on Jupiter. It has had a big red storm as long as people have been watching.

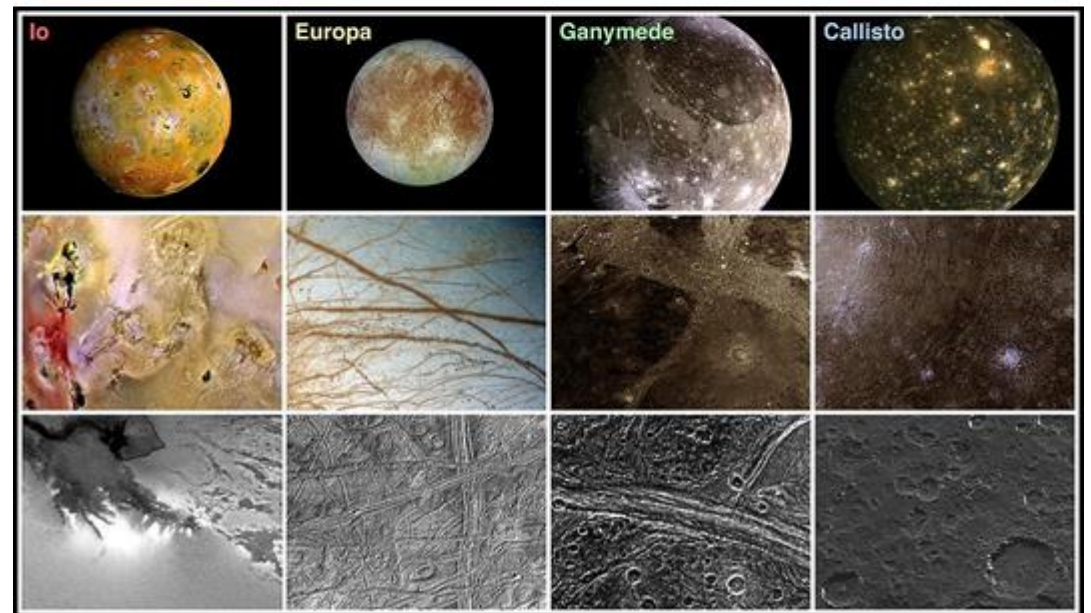
If I lived on Jupiter, I would still be waiting for my first birthday.



Could I live on Jupiter? Just like Venus, some people have said we could float above Jupiter. There are two problems. First, the winds on Jupiter is much too strong. It would rip our floating city apart. Most importantly, Jupiter is so big its gravity would pull anything down.

I don't think we are going to have Jupiter cities anytime soon.

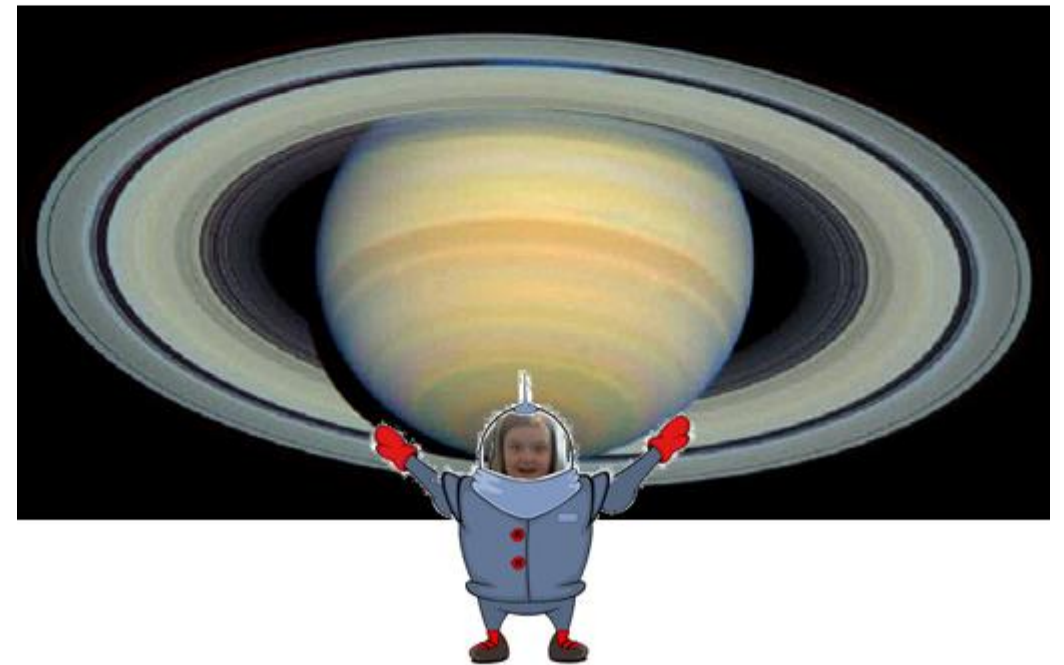
Probably best to visit one of the moons.



I guess the most famous planet is Saturn. It has those beautiful rings! They are made from ice and rocks around the planet. Jupiter, Uranus, and Neptune all have rings, but Saturn's are much bigger.

Saturn is very big, but it isn't very dense. If you put it in a tub of water, it would float! Of course... I don't have a tub that big!

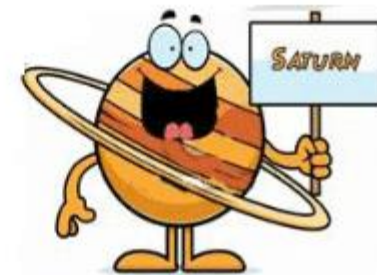
Years on Saturn are LOOOOONG. Even daddy would just barely be one year old. What a cute little baby!



There is a very famous book about someone finding a huge rock on a moon of Saturn. The rock was put there so people would find it. If there was really a monument like that on Saturn, where would it take us?

Of course, the best story about Saturn is the one Beyonce.

If you like it you better put a ring on it!

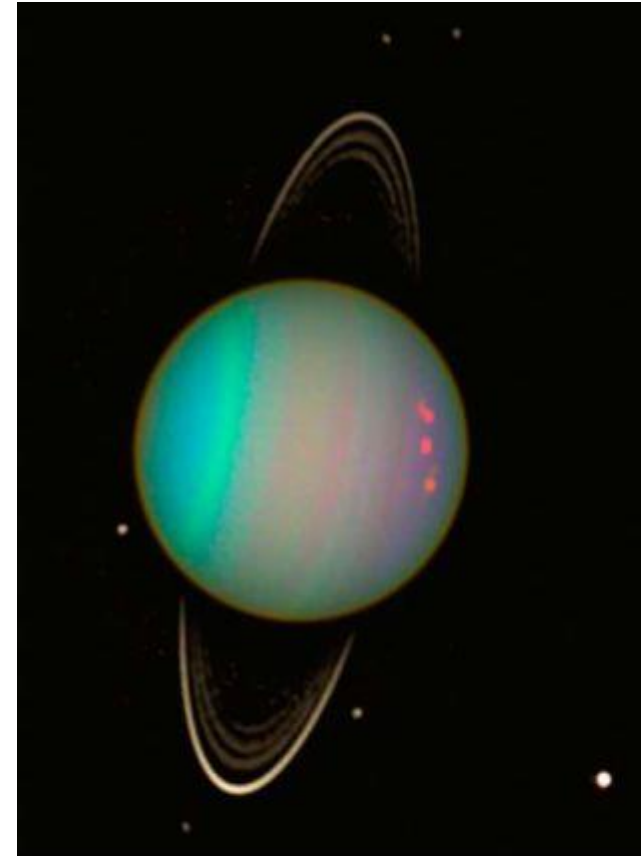


I have been looking forward to Uranus. It has a very funny sounding name.

The coolest thing about Uranus is that it spins on the side. It also has rings, but they aren't as cool as Saturn.

Uranus is very cold. Maybe you should sit on something hot.

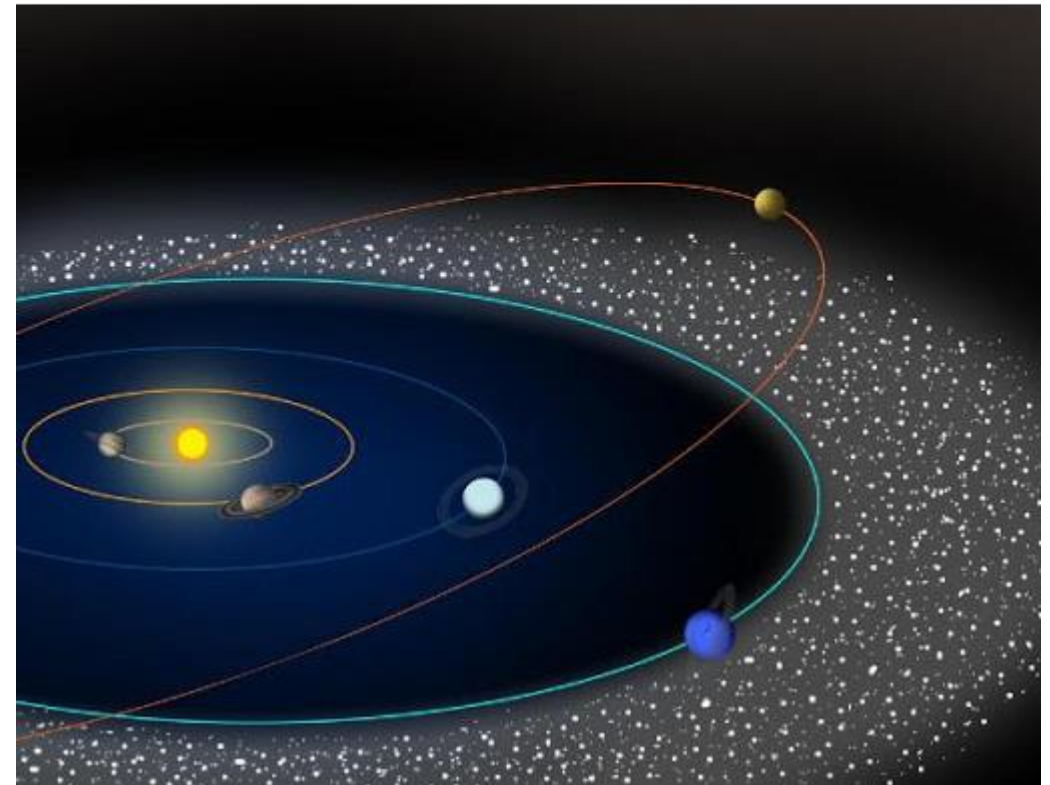
I don't know anyone old enough to have lived a year on Uranus. Some butts just are older than that.



The last planet is Neptune. It is last at everything. It has a big storm...but not as big as Jupiter's. It has nice rings... but not as nice as Saturn's. It has nice blue clouds... but not nice as Earth's.

Always last... poor Neptune.

He is so far out there that he practically touches the ring of rocks in the Kuiper belt.



Last of all we look back at our sun.
All of the planets around our sun get
their energy from this little star. It is
smaller than other stars, but still much
bigger than our tiny planets.

Our solar system is a small place in
the universe. Our planet is a small
planet in the solar system. I am a little
girl on that planet. I am still important
as a child of God. I matter even in this
big universe.

