



Size It!

Introduction

In the book, *Going Around the Sun: Some Planetary Fun* by Marianne Berkes, the reader is introduced to the eight planets that orbit (revolve) around the sun. In this activity, students compare the sizes of planets to different fruits and vegetables.

Materials Needed

- ◆ Fruits and vegetables listed below
- ◆ Long roll of white paper
- ◆ Markers
- ◆ *Going Around the Sun: Some Planetary Fun* by Marianne Berkes

Procedure

1. Unroll the paper and lay it out on a long table and tape it down.
2. Read *Going Around the Sun: Some Planetary Fun*.
3. On the paper, ask nine students to draw a large Sun and each of the eight planets, in the correct order and approximate sizes, using the glossary in the book as a guide.
Note: Students need to be aware of what the others are drawing, i.e. when the student draws the Earth, the student drawing Mercury should make it smaller, whereas the student drawing Jupiter should make his/her's a lot bigger.
4. When they have finished, place a large pumpkin (about 60 inches wide) where the drawing of the Sun is.
5. Put the other fruits and vegetables in a large bowl and set it on the table.
6. Students remove fruits and vegetables from bowl working together to assign the correct fruit or vegetable to each planet. Relative sizes: Mercury – one pea; Venus – small grape; Earth – small radish; Mars –blueberry; Jupiter – cantaloupe; Saturn – grapefruit; Uranus – orange; Neptune – small peach or plum.

Key Concepts

- ◆ Models can be used in explanations.
- ◆ A system is an organized group of related objects or components.
- ◆ Objects can be described by their properties and classified accordingly.

For standards correlation please see our website.

Nature Connections

- ◆ Use a telescope and try to find Venus in the night sky. What other objects can students find in a telescope? Can they find any man made objects in the night sky?
- ◆ Determine the distance that Venus is from Earth. Ask students to research different types of vehicles, including space craft. How long would it take someone to get to Venus from the Earth using one of these vehicles? How long would it take them to reach the dwarf planet Pluto?

Additional Resources

Fun Facts about The Sun

- ◆ Solar Winds are made up of atomic particles pushed out from the Sun.
- ◆ Solar Flares can cause satellites orbiting the Earth to malfunction.
- ◆ Sun Spots are areas of the Sun's surface that are cooler than the surrounding areas.
- ◆ 98% of all matter within the Solar System is found within the Sun.

