

● Tips from the Author



Going Around the Sun offers some wonderful opportunities for extended activities. Here are a few ideas:

Create a play Teachers may want to use this book for a reader's theater. Students can help put the script

together with a narrator and ten or more characters. Younger children can also sing this adaptation of "Over in the Meadow" by Olive A. Wadsworth.



Remember their names and positions When Pluto was still considered a planet, one device to remember the names of the planets and their order from the Sun was "My Very Educated Mother Just Sent Us Nine Pizzas." Ask students for their ideas on how to remember it now.

Flannel board story Out of felt, cut a very large Sun and the relative sizes of the eight planets and dwarf planet, Pluto. Place them (or have children do it) on a navy blue or black flannel board as you sing or read the story.

Space Word Wall Discuss the action verb used for each planet, using the glossary as a guide. Write each verb on an index card and place on a poster board. On a larger board, place names of the planets and other nouns like galaxy, axis, etc. Older students can find adjectives and adverbs used in the story as well.

Planet bookmarks Visit my website, www.MarianneBerkes.com, to learn how you can get reproducible bookmarks of the eight different planets.

Plan a model Whether inside the classroom or outside on a playground or in a park, create a model of the planets rotating and revolving around a Sun. Here are three excellent sites for assistance with the numbers:

www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/astronomy/planets

www.exploratorium.edu/ronh/solar_system

http://www.planetary.org/explore/kids/activities/solar_system_model.html

Discover more Here are a few books, web-based resources and organizations:

- *Exploring the Solar System with 22 Activities* by Mary Kay Carson (2006)
- *The Planets* by Gail Gibbons (Rev. Ed. 2005)
- *Solar System* by Mike Goldsmith (2005)
- *The Planets in Our Solar System* by Franklyn M. Branley (1998)
- *The Planetary Society* has educational games at www.planetary.org/explore/kids/
- The NASA Kids Club main page is www.nasa.gov/audience/forkids/home/index.html
- The Lunar and Planetary Institute has an education site, www.lpi.usra.edu/education
- Check out www.haydenplanetarium.org, and at the American Museum of Natural History's terrific "Ology" site, www.ology.amnh.org/astronomy/

I would love to hear from teachers and parents who come up with other creative ideas on ways to use this book. My website is www.MarianneBerkes.com



● Tips from the Illustrator



I was visiting an elementary school in Graceville, Florida when I met an art teacher who grinned, grabbed my arm and hurried me to her big bright art room that smelled like imagination bubbling over. Her kids were making beautiful art by painting with crayons on a warm griddle.



“Exactly what I need to create the illustrations for *Going Around The Sun: Some Planetary Fun*” I said. I raced back to my studio in South Florida with a new pancake griddle under one arm and a great big box of crayons under the other.



I peeled the paper off each crayon and covered the griddle with aluminum foil. Then I turned the dial to “warm.” You’ll know the temperature is not too hot, and not too cool when your crayons slide across fresh sheets of paper like a whisper.



Day after lovely day I painted the backgrounds for all of the pages in this book with my melted crayons.

I painted clear gesso over all of the melted crayon backgrounds, and with brushes, acrylic gouache, color pencils and a little computer magic

I created the planets, star clusters and asteroids layer by layer over each other until I finished the art you see in these pages.



You can paint with melted crayons, too. You’ll need a helpful adult, a griddle, some crayons, a little aluminum foil and some fresh paper. Or you could make wax paper planets like this:

Begin by sharpening crayons over a paper plate. Ask an adult to help by heating up an iron. Place your crayon shavings between two sheets of waxed paper and carefully set the iron on the waxed paper for just an instant. The crayon will melt quickly between the two sheets of waxed paper. When it cools you can cut out shapes of the planets and tape them to the inside of your windows or hang them from strings to create your very own solar system. You can visit me at www.JaneenMason.com.

