

Our Solar System

1 Getting Started

Our solar system consists of four inner planets, four outer planets, dwarf planets such as Pluto, several moons, and many asteroids and comets.

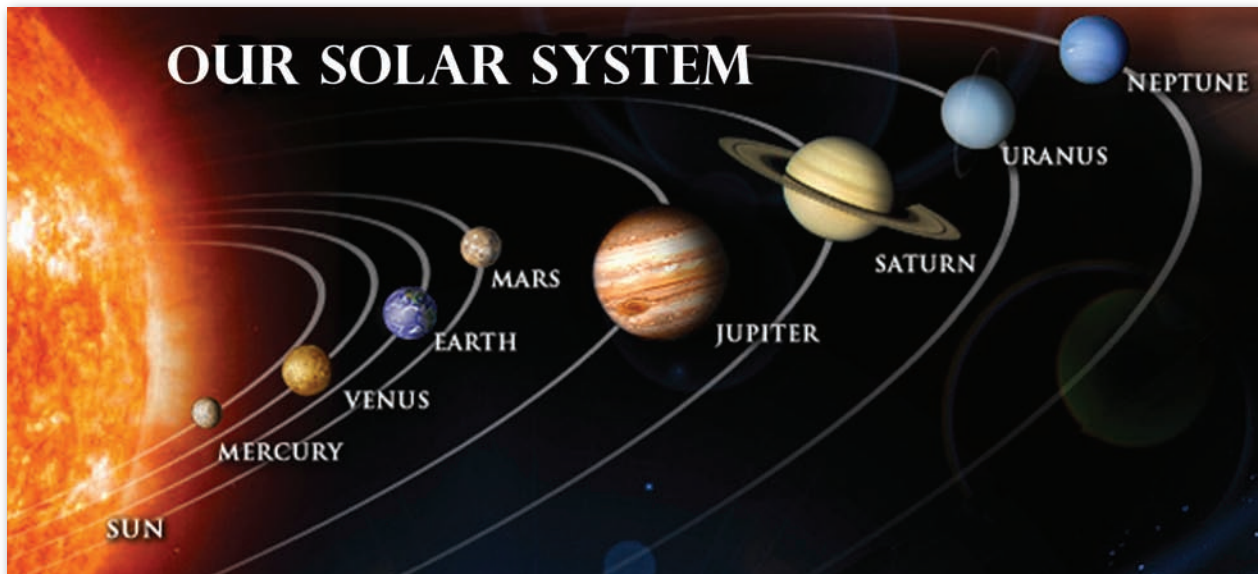
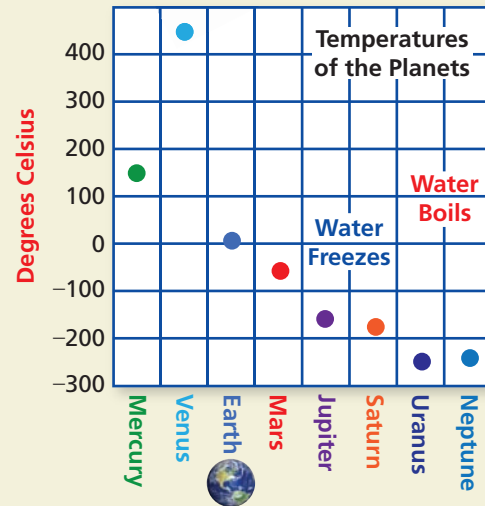
Essential Question How do the characteristics of a planet influence whether or not it can sustain life?



Sample: The average temperatures of the eight planets in our solar system are shown in the graph.

The average temperature tends to drop as the distance between the Sun and the planet increases.

An exception to this rule is Venus. It has a higher average temperature than Mercury, even though Mercury is closer to the Sun.



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Things to Include

- Compare the masses of the planets.
- Compare the gravitational forces of the planets.
- How long is a “day” on each planet? Why?
- How long is a “year” on each planet? Why?
- Which planets or moons have humans explored?
- Which planets or moons could support human life? Explain your reasoning.



Mars Rover

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Things to Remember

- Add your own drawings or photographs to your report. You can download photographs of the solar system and space travel at [NASA.gov](https://www.nasa.gov).
- Organize your report in a folder, and think of a title for your report.



Hubble Image of Space



Hubble Spacecraft