



NASA SpacePlace

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News and Notes for formal and informal educators

The Space Place is a NASA website for elementary school-aged kids, their teachers, and their parents.

It's colorful!
It's dynamic!
It's fun!

It's rich with
science, technology,
engineering, and
math content!

It's informal.
It's meaty.
It's easy to read and
understand.
It's also in Spanish.
And it's free!

It has 130 (and
counting) separate
modules for kids,
including hands-on
projects, interac-
tive games, animated
cartoons, and
amazing facts about
space and Earth
science and
technology.

Here's the Latest on *spaceplace.nasa.gov* . . .

It's hard to tell the breathtaking reality from the art in the new Space Place collection of "Slider" puzzles at [spaceplace](http://spaceplace.nasa.gov).



spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/spitzer/slyder. Because some of the discoveries of Spitzer are not of a visual nature, artists show us what the new information might mean visually. Players pick from a rich variety of galaxies, nebulae, and planetary disks, pick a difficulty level, then rearrange the scrambled tiles to make a whole picture.

. . . y en Español

También, el universo infrarrojo has a Slider game on The Space Place *en español*. Most of the games, amazing facts, and other activities have Spanish twins on The Space Place. For learners of either language, the site is a valuable and entertaining helper.

Spotlight on "Animations"

A picture is worth a thousand words. A moving picture is worth a thousand pictures. Add sound and a few buttons to play with and there's no limit to what you can say. That's the thinking behind the "Animations" section of The Space Place (spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/animations.shtml). These pages are of two types: (1) Watch, listen, be entertained and (by the way) learn something, and (2) play and see what happens.

In the first category are the "Space Place Live!" episodes (spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/live). Cartoon talk shows present real NASA scientists and engineers interviewed by Space Place characters. The guests voice themselves, bringing to life their cartoon alter-egos. They discuss their jobs, their passion for their work, their early influences, and what they do for fun. Despite their altitudinous accomplishments and galactic goals, they are down-to-Earth role models for kids.

In the second category, interactive animations demonstrate, for example,

- How orbits work;
- How ordinary things look in infrared;
- How a computer uses artificial evolution to design part of a spacecraft;
- Why we need telescopes that see different kinds of light;
- How a spacecraft sends a picture of a planet back to Earth.

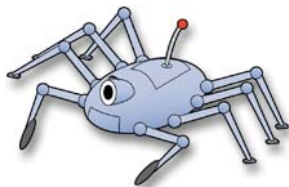


that turns the 1's and 0's into data packets
just like the packets the spacecraft created in the first place.
Still other computers turn the data packets into pictures

Summer Program Activity

A simple-to-make and tricky-to-solve puzzle is the Mosaic Robot Puzzle (spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/robots/robot_puzzle.shtml). This activity works well in summer program or camp environments.

Print the page from an Adobe Reader (.pdf) file on a color printer, if available. Or, print the black and white line version and let the kids color the robots with crayons or colored pencils. It's a good idea to glue or paste the page onto a heavier backing, such as a used file folder. Then cut the puzzle into nine square pieces, mix them up, and just try to fit them together again. We dare you!



If you hadn't cut the pieces apart yourself, you might think there was no solution. It's a fun challenge for the kids, and they'll enjoy taking it home and stumping their parents and siblings.

Spotlight on SciJinks

"SciJinks Weather Laboratory" (scijinks.gov) is the sister website of The Space Place. In one way, it is the little sister, because it is not quite as extensive or broad in content as The Space Place. In another way, it is the big sister, because it targets middle-school kids and educators, rather than elementary age.

SciJinks shows how exciting and fun weather can be. A gyrating "Nimbus 1" weather blimp and a clap of thundering, edgy music welcome you to the home page. You can first roam through the blimp-platformed weather laboratory or charge ahead and choose from the Fun, People, Technology, or How & Why categories. You don't have to register or log in to have full access to the site.

A favorite in the "Fun" category is writing your own "Unpredictable Weather Stories" (scijinks.gov/weather/fun/adlib). Similar to "Mad-Libs," the "writer" comes up with random nouns, adjectives, verbs, sounds, etc. The words are then used in a story about a harrowing weather adventure. This activity can be done online or using a printed out text version.



Celebrate Special Days

Every day is special at The Space Place, with a new fact of the day to observe or celebrate. Here are a few special reasons to celebrate in June and July:

June is recycling month . . .

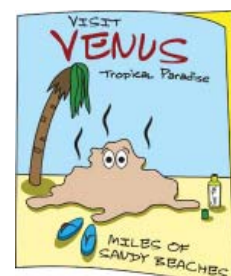
. . . as every month should be. Recycle all you can! Read the "Recipe for an Ecosphere" (spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/earth/wordfind) and print out any number of easy, medium, or hard word-find puzzles for your kids (or yourself) with words about air, land, water, and life.

June 15: Father's Day

Most dads like rockets. The Pop Rocket (spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/rocket.shtml) is easy to make, safe, and lots of fun for kids and grownups to launch together. Kids can make the rockets ahead of time and then take their fathers out to launch them as a fun Father's day activity.

June 20, 2008: Summer Solstice

If you think it's hot where you are, read about summer on Venus at spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/goes/planets.



June 24: Celebration of the Senses Day

A good day to celebrate the poor, neglected nose. "Let's Get Nosey" is a fun scent identification game. It also tells how NASA scientists have developed an artificial nose (spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/enose_do1.shtml)

July 20: Moon Day

On this day in 1969, Neil Armstrong was the first human to walk on the Moon. Celebrate by making yummy no-bake Moon Cookies (spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/moon_cookies.shtml).

July 23: Ice cream cone invented in 1904

The cone is a useful shape. It's even good for magnifying sounds. Make a Super Sound Cone and find (or make!) a quiet environment to try it out (spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/tmodact.shtml).

July 31, 1971: First vehicle driven on the Moon!

See and print pictures of the Apollo Lunar Rover at spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/educators/teachers_moon_images.shtml.

How do you use The Space Place?

Please let us know how you use spaceplace.nasa.gov. Share this newsletter with others, and share your ideas with us. Send them to spaceplace@jpl.nasa.gov. We may include your idea in our next newsletter!