



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, interactive games, animated cartoons, and amazing facts about space and Earth science and technology.

It's summertime here at The Space Place, and in this issue we are thinking about how we can contribute to a fun and productive summer for kids, parents, scouting leaders, and other informal educators.

Here's the latest on spaceplace.nasa.gov . . .

In the latest episode of "Space Place Live!," Space Place kids Kate and Kyo interview a cartoon version of the Deputy Project Manager of the GOES satellite, Andre Dress. Andre works at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland. He talked with Kate and Kyo about preparing the new GOES-O weather satellite—and the team—for the most exciting day of the mission—the launch!



Space Place Live! features conversations with the cartoon alter-egos of NASA scientists and engineers, voiced by themselves. The goal of "Space Place Live!" is to introduce kids to the human, down-to-Earth side of real scientists and engineers working in the space program. Each guest is presented as a passionate and accomplished role model for every child interested in science or engineering.

Eight episodes await your enjoyment at spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/live.

Space Place en Español

Word-find puzzles are fun and challenging. For a Spanish learner, a Spanish word-find can be extra challenging because of the diacriticals. Although each Spanish page or activity on The Space Place has an English equivalent, the word-find puzzles are gen-

erated in real time. That means adding a translation step to the puzzle solution could be part of the fun.



Space Place en Español has two word-find activities. One is about comets (spaceplace.nasa.gov/sp/kids/cnsr_wordfind.shtml) and the other is about balancing Earth's ecology (spaceplace.nasa.gov/sp/kids/earth/wordfind). The latter page includes four puzzles, with word collections related to air, water, land, and life. Combine language arts with science with just plain puzzle fun in these online activities.

Spotlight on Scouting

Working with Boy Scouts of America and Girl Scouts of the USA, we have identified those requirements in the scout handbooks that can be either partially or completely fulfilled using resources on The Space Place Web



site. The result is a matrix that matches specific requirements with specific Space Place activities. The matrices (found at spaceplace.nasa.gov/cubscouts and spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/girlscouts) link directly to referenced parts of the Web site.

For example, one activity is to make a model planet Saturn from an unwanted CD and a small Styrofoam ball, adding some glitter, and a paper clip for hanging it. Model Saturn created, the boy has fulfilled the Tiger Cub (boys in the first grade or seven years old) elective requirement to “make a decoration for your family or your den.”

As another example, a Senior Girl Scout project for space exploration technology is to build an accurate scale model of a space exploration vehicle. A perfect match would be the asteroid nanorover at spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/muses1.shtml. The model uses Styrofoam trays, a straw, a balloon, and not much else, save for the detailed printable pattern included. This model is not only to scale, it is actual size!

Many other projects, games, images to collect, and easy-to-understand explanations on the Web site support the goals of many other Cub Scout and Girl Scout requirements.

After School or Summer Activity

Play the Wild Weather Adventure Game (spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/goes/wwa). This online game has the look and feel of a real board game. It actually started life as a printed board game, created by The Space Place Team. Then we reincarnated it online, staying faithful to the original, but adding a few bells and whistles.



The game board is a map of the world. In your own weather research blimp, you travel the world, have adventures, make rescues, solve problems, and strive to beat your opponents to the Finish. This game can be played by up to four players. If you are playing alone, your opponent is the computer, and you can even choose how smart your opponent will be!

Some turns present the player with a question about weather, other Earth science topics, or geography. For geography questions, players can consult a reference map and find the answer.

It's a fun learning tool for all ages.

Dates to Celebrate

June 3, 1965: First space walk.

The recent Space Shuttle mission to repair the Hubble Space Telescope marks how far humans have come in spacesuit technology. Dr. Marc writes about the challenges of designing a protective, yet functional, spacesuit at spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/phonedrmarc/2002_october.shtml.

June 5, World Environment Day.

Learn about the greenhouse effect and the kinds of gases that contribute to global warming. Make model “Gummy Greenhouse Gases” from gumdrops and toothpicks. Thinking about what they represent, kids might not be so eager to eat them. Go to spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/tes/gumdrops.

June 21, Father's Day.

Build a Newtonian Physics Machine with Dad. This activity can involve using a couple of Dad's tools, so is a good one to share. Check it out at spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/funphysics.shtml.

July 7, 1981: First solar-powered airplane flew across the English Channel.

Solar power is a very “green” way to power an airplane. Read about Helios, the solar-powered plane that went a lot higher and farther than did the first one in 1981. Helios is at spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/helios_fact.shtml.

July 20, 1969: Humans first set foot on the Moon!

Forty-year anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landing. Building a Moon Habitat would be a great way to observe this important anniversary. Easy instructions at spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/exploration/habitat.

July 21, 1633: Galileo Galilei . . .

. . . gets in big trouble for saying that Earth orbits the Sun, instead of vice versa. Dr. Marc's answer to “Why do the planets go around the Sun?” would have set Galileo's critics straight.

Don't forget . . .

Celebrate the 2009 International Year of Astronomy! If you are having an event, or plan special space-related activities for summer camp or day care, The Space Place Web site can be a valuable resource. Let us know how you plan to use The Space Place in your activities. We may be able to supply you with Space Place bookmarks and other materials. E-mail your request to spaceplace@jpl.nasa.gov.

