

Homework Menu #1



name: _____

date: _____

Directions: For homework this month you will be working on and completing projects of your choice. Below is a list of projects that you may choose from. If you have an idea of your own which is not listed, check with Russ for permission to try it. As you complete each project you will have a chance to share it with your classmates. Some projects may take more time than others to finish. To keep track of the time you spend on your homework projects, you and your parents will complete a homework time sheet that is to be turned in each Friday. When you finish one project, begin working on your next project as soon as you can. All projects will be due no later than the nearest Friday to the end of the month. At that time a new menu will be given out.

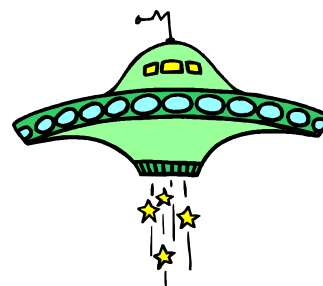
Focus of the Month: Space

Skills included: Reading comprehension; interpreting/infering; analyzing and synthesizing information; data collection; oral and written communication; artistic representation; historical research.

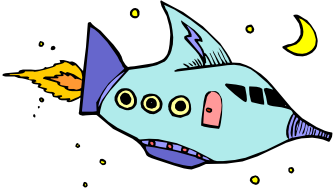
Project Menu:



- On August 27, 2003 Mars and Earth moved to where they were the closest they had been in 60,000 years! Looking up in the sky that night it was obvious why Mars is called the red planet, its color could be seen even without a telescope. To help you find out about Mars, you can read books and magazine articles from the Library or you can visit NASA's Mars Exploration website at: <http://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/> or NASA's Mars for Kids website at: <http://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/participate/funzone/> After you have discovered everything you can about the planet Mars, create a short presentation to teach the rest of our class what you learned. Your presentation may be in the form of a labeled poster with drawings, pictures, maps, and charts; it may be a written or oral report; or perhaps even a PowerPoint presentation.
- One of the first books I remember reading that I really enjoyed was The Martian Chronicles by Ray Bradbury. After that I was hooked on science fiction novels. Read a science fiction book or story and then use your creative talents to write a new ending to the book you read, or write a whole new story. Be sure to use your best penmanship with your final draft or type it into a computer and print it out. To prepare yourself to read your story to your classmates, practice while using lots of expression with your family or your good friends. Bonus idea: include illustrations with your story.
- Our solar system is more than just the Sun, the Earth, the Moon, and Mars. Find out what our solar system is made up of and create a 3-D model of it. Be sure to label each of the parts of your model. To find out about our solar system you can visit The Nine Eight Planets for Kids website at: <http://kids.nineplanets.org/index.html> If you want to see directions for building a model of the solar system, one set of directions can be found online at: <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/astronomy/solarsystemmodel/> Be prepared to answer questions from your fellow students when you bring your model to school.



- Get together with your family and friends and make a short movie about space. It could be a documentary or a science fiction space film. First you will need to write a script and make copies for each character in your movie. Next you will need to practice and rehearse until everyone has their lines "down pat." Then you will need to video record it and perhaps do a final edit. Be sure that your movie is appropriate for school and doesn't include any scenes of violence. Bring your movie to school and share it with our class.



- Games are one of the best ways to have fun learning new things (at least I love playing them). After spending time reading about space, planets, stars, asteroids, black holes, galaxies, and anything else about space that you find yourself interested in; create a board game that helps all of its players learn what you learned. Bonus idea: design a box to keep your game in and an advertising poster that would really interest people in your game.

- Astronauts live exciting and sometimes dangerous lives. They are often heroes and good role models for the rest of us. Choose an astronaut and find out everything you can about him or her. To get information about the astronaut you choose, you can check books out from the library, watch a video about astronauts, or look them up on the Internet (you might even be able to email them with some specific questions). After you have done your research, decide on what is the most important and interesting things about their life and then use that information to write a biography about them. Bring your final draft to school and read a portion of it to the class.



- Other: _____



Expectations: It is expected that chosen projects will be finished completely, neatly, and in a timely manner. It is also expected that students will gain a depth of understanding about their project's topic upon completion. Further, while students are encouraged to work on one project at a time, it is entirely possible for students to complete any number of projects in the timeframe given. Students should also remember to keep homework interesting by challenging themselves to learn as much as possible and to do the best work they can.

Important: These projects will likely require mutual involvement of students and their parents. To ensure the quality and depth of understanding expected, they likely cannot be completed in one evening prior to the due date. Each student will have to use their time wisely, doing a little bit at a time until a project is complete. Use the Project Planning Form to help you successfully complete your project on time.



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