

Building A Solar System

From Harcourt TE

Problem:

How far away are each of the planets from Earth?

Prior Knowledge:

What is a planet? How many planets are in *our* solar system?

Materials:

Self-stick circles, meter stick

Directions/Procedure:

1. Using 9 self-stick circles, write the first letter of each planet on a circle
2. Using a wall corner as your starting point, measure in 6 cm.
3. Place the “Mercury” circle in this spot
4. Using the table in “Data/Observations” as your guide, place the remaining circles on the wall
5. Measure the distance from “Earth” to the other planets. Record your results

Data/Observations:

Planet	Mercury	Venus	Earth	Mars	Jupiter	Saturn	Uranus	Neptune	Pluto
Distance from Sun (cm)	6	11	15	23	78	143	287	450	590
Distance from Earth (cm)									

Analysis:

Compare your results.

Which two planets are the closest? Farthest away?

Conclusion:

Venus and Mars are the closest. Neptune and Pluto are the farthest away.