

Skimming and Scanning: Space Facts

Skimming and scanning is a useful skill for finding important information in a text quickly. Skim and scan this passage of text to answer the following questions. Read the questions first to work out which key words to look for in the text. **You don't need to read every word in each passage.**

Mars

Mars is the fourth planet from the Sun. It is named after the Roman god of war and is often described as the 'red planet' due to its red appearance. This red tint is caused by a mineral called iron oxide, which is very common on the surface of Mars. Mars has the largest dust storms in the solar system, which can often last for months and cover the entire planet. Olympus Mons is the largest mountain in the solar system and it is found on Mars.

Saturn

Saturn is the sixth planet in the solar system and is famous for the rings which surround it. Saturn is one of the planets known as a 'gas giant' because it is mainly composed of the gases hydrogen, helium and methane. Saturn has many moons, the largest of which are Titan and Rhea.

Neptune

Neptune can only be seen through a large telescope and was not discovered until 1845. It is the eighth planet from the Sun and is also a 'gas giant', as it is mainly composed of hydrogen and helium. It takes Neptune 165 earth years to orbit the sun.

Pluto

Pluto was once described as the ninth planet in the solar system. However, in 2006, it was agreed that it should be classed as a dwarf planet rather than an official planet in the solar system.

Questions

Why does Mars have a red appearance?

What is Olympus Mons?

Which is the sixth planet in the solar system?

Which planets mentioned in this passage are known as 'gas giants'?

What was discovered in 1845?

Is Pluto a planet in our solar system?

Skimming and Scanning: Space Facts Answers

Why does Mars have a red appearance?

The iron oxide on the planet's surface gives it its red appearance.

What is Olympus Mons?

Olympus Mons is a mountain on Mars. It is the largest mountain in the solar system.

Which is the sixth planet in the solar system?

Saturn.

Which planets mentioned in this passage are known as 'gas giants'?

Saturn and Neptune.

What was discovered in 1845?

Neptune.

Is Pluto a planet in our solar system?

No, it is a dwarf planet.