

Name: _____

Date: _____

Earth and Space



In our solar system, the Earth is just one of eight planets that orbit around a star called the Sun. Each planet has unique characteristics, but Earth is special because it's the only planet known to have life. Let's take a closer look at our solar system and how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples understood the night sky.

The Solar System: The Sun is a massive ball of burning gas that gives light and heat to our solar system. It's at the centre, with planets orbiting around it. Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune are the planets in our solar system. They vary in size, composition, and distance from the Sun. The closest four planets to the Sun are known as terrestrial planets. The four other planets are known as Jovian planets or gas giants. Earth is our home planet and the only one known to support life. It has an atmosphere that protects us and provides the air we breathe. It's also unique with its vast oceans, diverse landscapes, and abundance of living organisms.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Knowledge: For thousands of years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have observed the night sky and developed deep knowledge about celestial bodies. They used the stars, Moon, and planets for navigation, seasonal calendars, and timekeeping. Oral cultural records, petroglyphs (rock engravings), paintings, and stone arrangements provide evidence of their sophisticated understanding of astronomy.

Examples of Knowledge:

- **Seasonal Calendars:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples used the positions of stars and constellations to track seasons for hunting, gathering, and ceremonies.
- **Timekeeping:** They observed the movements of celestial bodies to determine the time of year, important events, and changes in the environment.
- **Dreamtime Stories:** These stories often incorporate celestial elements, explaining the origins of stars, the Sun, and the Moon in cultural contexts.



1. How many planets are there in our solar system, and which ones are terrestrial? _____

2. What is unique about Earth compared to other planets in our solar system? _____

3. What protects Earth and provides air that we breathe? _____

4. How did Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples use the night sky? _____

5. What did Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples use the positions of stars and constellations for? _____



1. How many planets are there in our solar system, and which ones are terrestrial? There are 8 planets. The first four planets are terrestrial planets – Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars.

2. What is unique about Earth compared to other planets in our solar system? Earth is our home planet and the only one known to support life.

3. What protects Earth and provides air that we breathe? The atmosphere.

4. How did Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples use the night sky? They used the stars, Moon, and planets for navigation, seasonal calendars, and timekeeping.

5. What did Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples use the positions of stars and constellations for? Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples used the positions of stars and constellations to track seasons for hunting, gathering, and ceremonies.