



the Space Place

September - October 2011, Vol. 4, Issue 4

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 over 150 separate modules for kids, including hands-on projects, interactive games, animated cartoons, and amazing facts about space and Earth science and technology.

Appearances can be deceiving. But that's not the case with the Space Place. Our jazzy, pizzazzy new look only enhances the appeal, accessibility, and navigability of our quality resources. The new Space Place includes all the compelling, fun, and educational content it always has. Explore. Enjoy!

New at spaceplace.nasa.gov



As we promised in the March - April issue this year, the "new and improved" Space Place is here! It is reorganized, revamped, rebuilt, and recommitted as a fun, free, fulfilling, and fantastic NASA Web site for kids, teachers, and parents. It makes use of the newest Web development tools and techniques to provide a more dynamic, interactive, educational, and enjoyable experience.

The menus are filterable on subject or type of activity. Searches of any word, term, or NASA mission produce customized menus. Dozens of educational and compelling games have been reframed as intrinsic parts of the site (no pop-ups or new contextually isolated windows or tabs). Many images and illustrations are enlargeable with a mouse click, and all videos run seamlessly within the page with no external video players or plug-ins needed. All pages are printer friendly.

The site includes over 150 separate modules intrinsic to the site, plus links to other valuable NASA kids' sites for our grades-4-6 target audience. The modules and links are classified under the categories of Space, Earth, Sun, Solar System, People & Technology, and Parents & Teachers.

Check it out. Let us know what you think. E-mail your feedback to info@spaceplace.nasa.gov.

Space Place en español



The vast majority of the modules (games, activities, fun facts) on the new and improved Space Place are also available in Spanish, as are the menus and other navigation features. As before, you can toggle back and forth between English and Spanish versions of these pages. The content and images on the two versions are identical. It's an ideal design for English learners or Spanish learners.

Focus on Space Place Live!



Kate and Kyo may not be slick, professional talk show hosts, but they do an entertaining job of finding out about the careers and interests of happy and passionate NASA

Where kids and grown-ups have fun with space science and technology

scientists and engineers. Their most recent guest, Dr. Merav Opher, is a scientist on the distinguished Voyager mission, with its two spacecraft still alive and well after 34 years in space. They are now approaching the very boundary between the solar system and interstellar space. Dr. Merav talks about what Voyager is finding out there, her passion for physics . . . and opera! Watch this new episode at <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/space-place-live>.

For the classroom

Want to see all the image galleries on The Space Place? Just type “gallery” into the search box, and you’ll get a custom menu with links to our Solar System, Earth, Space, Sun, and People & Technology galleries.



Each gallery shows a page of thumbnails, with short captions. Mouse over a thumbnail and you’ll see a tiny “Do” icon. Click on it to display the image and its large-font caption to print and post in the classroom. Or, just click on the thumbnail image itself to display a larger image and caption in a slide show format. Keep clicking “Next” or “Prev” to move through all the images on the page. Go to <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/search/?q=gallery>, or just try the search box.

For out of school time

Stars look like tiny twinkling white lights on a black background. But, if you look carefully, you will see that they aren’t all white. Some are red, or blue, or yellow.

Why? Your kids and you can find out while making crispy, delicious star cookies that shine in all these colors. You will also find out how un-star-shaped real stars are. It’s the light distortion caused by our turbulent atmosphere that gives them their twinkling, pointy shapes.

And how can you tell whether a star has planets?

Have fun baking, tasting, and exploring stars at <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/star-cookies>.

Special Days

September 6: Read a Book Day

Get back into the swing of school. Choose from

five fun, spacey story books, all of which can be read in a few minutes. Go to <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/search/?q=storybook>.



September 13: Positive Thinking day

Think positive when you rub balloon on your head. Although it may be negative ions that rub off and pick up little pieces of paper, it will leave you feeling more positive. Try the “Ions in action” experiment at <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/ion-balloons>.

September 18, 1977: Voyager 1 took the first picture of Earth and Moon together.

Now Voyager 1 is about to reach interstellar space. If it finds aliens, what will they learn about us? Find out <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/voyager-to-stars>.

October 5, 1882: Robert Hutchings Goddard was born.

Goddard is known as the “Father of the Space Age,” because, in 1926, he built and successfully launched the first liquid-fueled rocket. Launch a bubble-fueled rocket at <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/pop-rocket>.



October 13: Train Your Brain day

Ozone Trap-n-Zap is a great game for training your brain to recognize good ozone from bad ozone. You will also help the planet. Play at <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/ozone>.

October 26, 1959: Earth people see far side of the Moon for the first time.

The Lunik 3 spacecraft (Soviet Union) takes the first photo of the far side of the Moon. See lots of pictures of all sides of the Moon at <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/gallery-earth/#moon>.

Last words . . .



We wish you and your students a wonderful and productive year.