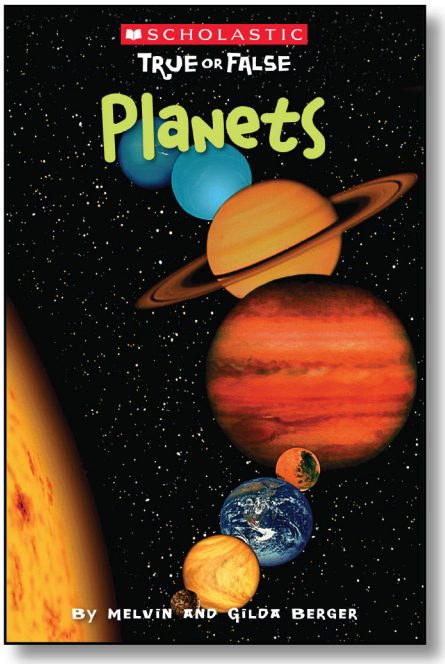


Teaching the Book

This engaging science book captures students' curiosity with 22 true-or-false questions about the planets. The answers are fun, easy to understand, and leave students wanting to know more. Use the book to introduce students to the solar system, to teach a main idea and details, and to build academic vocabulary. Activities engage students in learning about astronauts, calculating their own weight on different planets, and creating a true-or-false game.

Theme Focus: True-or-False Non-fiction
Comprehension Focus: Main Idea and Details
Language Focus: Words Related to Space

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Melvin Berger was born in 1927 and grew up during the Great Depression. He escaped from daily troubles by playing music and reading all the books in the local library. In college he studied electrical engineering and music, then played viola professionally before getting a master's degree in music education. His first book for children, *Science and Music*, set the stage for a long career writing fascinating non-fiction for young people.

Gilda Berger was born in the New York City borough of the Bronx on June 30, 1935. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees in education from New York's City College and became a special education teacher. Her many years addressing the special needs of youngsters with learning and physical disabilities have contributed to her success as a writer.

BOOK STATS

Grade Level Equivalent: 2–3
Lexile Measure®: AD490L
Genre: Science Non-fiction
Subject/Theme: Planets, Solar System, Space
Ages: 7+
Pages: 48

Common Core State Standards	Reading	Writing	Listening & Speaking	Language
Grade 2	RI.2.1, RI.2.2, RI.2.4, RI.2.6	W.2.2, W.2.3	SL.2,1, SL.2.2, SL.2.5	L.2.4
Grade 3	RI.3.1, RI.3.2, RI.3.4, RI.3.6	W.3.2, W.3.3	SL.3,1, SL.3.2, SL.3.5	L.3.4

OVERVIEW

Book Summary

The Scholastic True-or-False series turns learning about the planets into a fun game that takes young readers on a voyage of discovery into outer space. The compelling true-or-false format delivers key facts about our solar system and beyond.

"Planets are the same as stars. True or False?" The book begins with this basic comparison of planets and stars. The question is posed on a right-hand page and the answer is found by flipping the page. A clear main idea answer is followed by important details plus a bonus fact. The book explains the composition of the planets, their order in the solar system, and the features of each planet, from Mercury to the dwarf planet Pluto. The book ends by leaving young readers to wonder about the hundreds of known planets outside our solar system.

Scholastic True or False #9: Planets provides a perfect introduction to planets and space for early elementary students by opening young minds to the wonders of our universe.

Get Ready to Read

Pre-Reading Activities

True or False? Engage students' interest and prepare them for reading the book by asking the following true-or-false questions. Tell students to look for the answers as they read the book.

1. Astronauts weigh the same on other planets as they do on Earth. (*False*)
2. Mercury is the planet closest to the sun. (*True*)
3. The surface of Earth is mostly land. (*True*)
4. Astronauts have landed on Mars. (*False*)
5. There are no planets beyond our solar system. (*False*)

Tally and record students' answers on chart paper or the whiteboard and return to the questions after reading the book.

Preview and Predict Have students study the cover of *Scholastic True of False #9: Planets*. Ask them to describe what they see and name any planets that they recognize.

Vocabulary

Space-Related Words Introduce these words about planets and outer space, explaining that they are special science terms that describe parts of our solar system and the humans who explore it. Ask students to watch for the words as they read and to use the text and photographs to help them understand the words' meanings. Ask them to record the meaning of the words on the vocabulary cards.

Use **Resource #1: Vocabulary Cards** on page 7 and distribute copies to students.

star (p. 4)	planet (p. 4)
telescope (p. 6)	orbit (p. 8)
gravity (p. 12)	astronaut (p. 12)
moon (p. 24)	astronomer (p. 34)

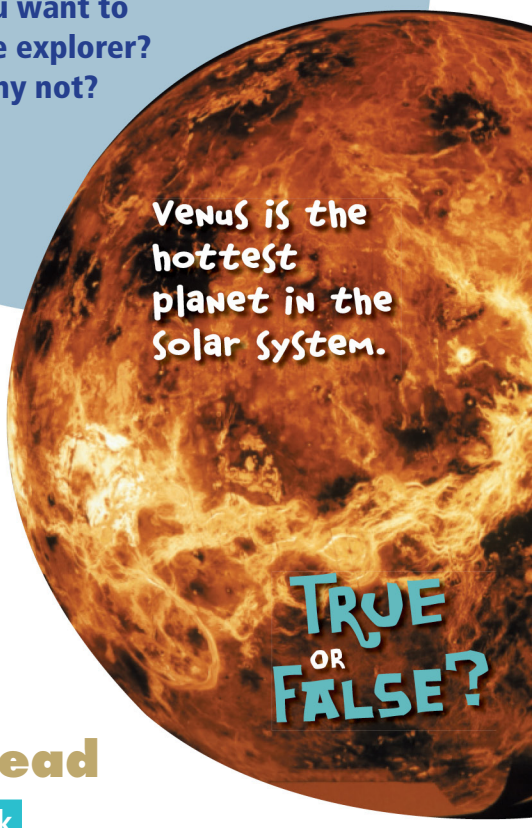
STORIA ENRICHMENTS

This book will be available as a Storia enriched e-book in June 2013.

BIG QUESTION

Critical Thinking Ask students to think about this question as they read. Write the question on chart paper or the whiteboard.

Would you want to be a space explorer? Why or why not?



As You Read

Reading the Book

Read-Aloud Read several questions and answers aloud to students, modeling fluency and expression. Encourage students to follow along in their own books. The read-aloud familiarizes students with the text type and builds their listening skills. Ask students what the authors' purpose is and explain that it is to inform. Point out that the authors make the book entertaining by using true-or-false questions.

Paired Reading Ask students to read the rest of the book with a partner, taking turns asking the questions and reading the answers. Encourage students to occasionally stop and check their comprehension with each other.

Comprehension Focus

Main Idea Explain to students that each answer on the left-hand page of the book has an important idea called a main idea. This main idea is supported by smaller ideas called details. The details tell us more about the main idea. Identifying main ideas and details helps readers understand what they are reading.

Display pages 3 and 4 and read the question and the answer to the students. Then model for students how to identify the main idea and details in the text.

> **Model:** The first sentence on page 4 is the main idea because it tells the most important idea—planets and stars look alike in the sky but they are very different. One detail that supports this main idea is that stars are much bigger than planets.

Use the cards on **Resource #2: Main Idea and Details** on page 8 for students to practice identifying main ideas and details. Pass out copies of the cards and have students cut them apart and mix them up. Then ask students to match each detail to the main idea it supports.

After You Read

Questions to Discuss

Lead students in a discussion of these focus story elements.

1. Genre How do you know if a statement about planets is true or false? (*Sample answer: By reading it in a book.*) Who do you think is an expert on facts about the planets? (*Sample answer: An astronomer, an astronaut, a space scientist*)

2. Main Idea and Details Find two details on page 22 that support this main idea: The Earth is covered mostly by water. (*Sample answer: Water covers 70% of the Earth's surface.*)

3. Space-Related Words When you look into the sky on a clear night, what are three things you might see? (*Sample answers: Stars, planets, the moon*)

Questions to Share

Encourage students to share their responses with a partner or small group.

1. Text-to-Self What fact from the book is most surprising?

2. Text-to-World Do you think we should try to send people to explore outer space? Or do you think we should send robots instead?

3. Text-to-Text What is another book you have read about space? Compare it to *Scholastic True or False #9: Planets*.

Words to Know

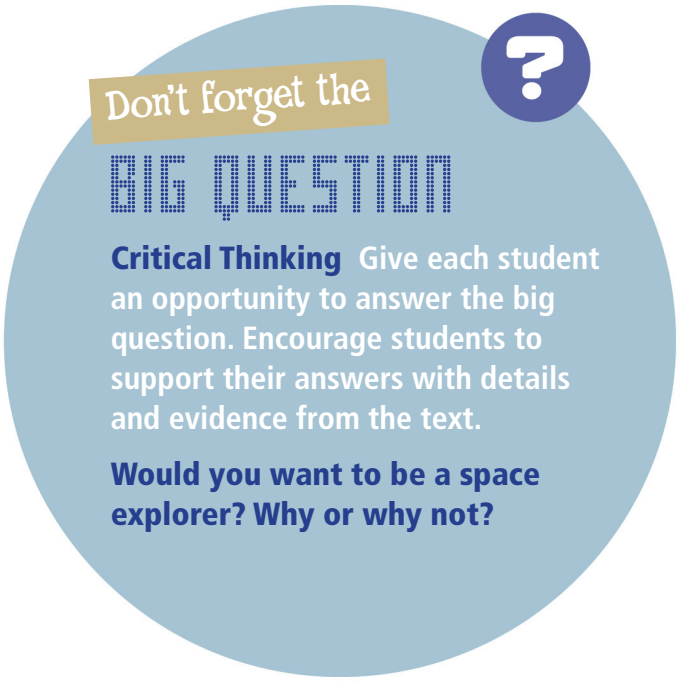
Space-Related Words **Read aloud the following true-of-false statements that use a vocabulary word. Ask students to answer true or false and then define the words using their vocabulary card notes.**

1. The sun is a **star**. (*True*)
2. A **planet** creates its own light. (*False*)
3. An **astronomer** explores space with a telescope. (*True*)
4. The planets in our solar system **orbit** the moon. (*True*)
5. **Gravity** keeps us from flying off into space. (*True*)
6. A **moon** is larger than the planet it revolves around. (*False*)
7. An **astronaut** goes into space aboard spaceships. (*True*)

Extension Activities

Reading/Writing Connection

Calling Earth Ask students to look through all the planets in the book and decide which one they would most like to visit as an astronaut. Then have them imagine that they are orbiting that planet in their spacecraft. What would they see? What dangers might they encounter? Ask students to write a radio transmission to send back to mission control on Earth. Ask them to include at least three important facts about the planet. Then have them read their messages aloud and make an audio recording.



Content Area Connections

Science **Rocket Science 101** Future rocket scientists will have fun visiting the NASA website for its many interactive videos and games, especially Rocket Science 101. Launch a few rockets with the class by visiting: ***http://1.usa.gov/Z34dE9***. The different levels of activities on the site will satisfy both rocket scientists who just want to have fun and those with more serious ambitions.

Language **Star Words** Challenge students to create a list of compound words that include the word *star.* Examples include: *Stardust*, *starfish*, *stargaze*, *starlight*, and *starship*. Also encourage them to learn words with the root word *astro*, the Greek word for star. Examples include: *Astrophysics*, *astronomer*, *astronaut*, *astrologer*, and *astrolabe*. Ask students to make a concept map with a star in the center to record all their star-studded words.

Math **Your Weight on Other Worlds** Help students understand the force of gravity by comparing how much they weigh on Earth to how much they would weigh on other planets. Explain that the gravitational pull between a very large object like Earth and a very small object, like a person, can be easily measured—simply by standing on a scale. Have students calculate how much they would weigh on various other space worlds by visiting the Exploratorium website at: ***http://bit.ly/UOIDjD***.

History **First Man on the Moon** Share with students original footage of the NASA Apollo 11 moon landing. On July 20, 1969, Neil Armstrong became the first man to walk on the moon. His famous words as he stepped onto the surface of the moon were: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." Show students this video of one of the most important moments in twentieth-century American history by visiting: ***http://bit.ly/VJvESA***.

BIG ACTIVITY

True-or-False Game Cards Have students apply their knowledge about planets or another science topic by creating True or False Game Cards. They can use the book as a mentor text to write the cards. Duplicate and pass out the **Big Activity Resource: True-or-False Game Cards** on page 6. Instruct students to write a true-or-false question on the front of each card and then write the answer on the back. Have students cut out their cards, combine them with other students' cards, and play the game.

Name: _____ Date: _____

BIG ACTIVITY: True-or-False Game Cards

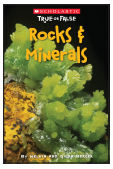
Write a true-or-false statement about planets or another science topic on the front of each of the four cards. Give the answer on the back.

Statement: **True or False?**	**Statement:** **True or False?**
Statement: **True or False?**	**Statement:** **True or False?**

READ MORE AND LEARN MORE

Use these books and other resources to expand your students' study of the book or theme.

Author/Series Connections



Scholastic True or False #10: Rocks and Minerals

Melvin Berger

Ages: 6–8 **Grades:** 2–3
Lexile Measure®: 780L **Pages:** 48

Are all rocks hard? Is Earth a big ball of rock? Do rocks last forever? The large full-color photos of desert landscapes, steaming hot springs, and exploding lava will boggle readers' minds, and easily digestible text will keep them interested. A unique format, impressive photography, and accessible writing make this book a great choice for engaging students in the basics of Earth's geology. **Available as a Storia e-book**

Scholastic True or False #11: Mammals

Melvin Berger

Ages: 6–8 **Grades:** 2–3
Lexile Measure®: 820L **Pages:** 48

Do all mammals live on land? Do they lay eggs? Do all have hair or fur? Can any mammals fly? Featuring twenty-two true-or-false statements about mammals and a fun question-and-answer format, the text in this terrific book is complemented with dazzling full-color photographs on every page. The unique format and vivid photography make this science reader ideal for getting kids engaged in science. **Available as a Storia e-book**

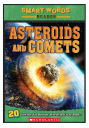
Scholastic True or False #12: Amphibians

Melvin Berger

Ages: 6–8 **Grades:** 2–3
Lexile Measure®: 790L **Pages:** 48

Some of the most unusual animals on our planet have not one home, but two! That's true for the amphibians in this book, from familiar ones like frogs and salamanders, to less familiar ones like mudpuppies and caecilians. Readers will learn what time of year salamanders are most likely to be seen, where most caecilians can be found, and what people can do to protect amphibians. **Available as a Storia e-book**

Subject Connections



Smart Words Science Reader #18: Asteroids and Comets

Ages: 6–8 **Grades:** 1–3 **Pages:** 32

The photos and diagrams in this clever science reader help students identify the nucleus and coma of a comet, visit the asteroid belt to learn about its orbit, and watch space probes and telescopes in action. As they learn about the rocks hurtling through Earth's solar system, students will also gain exposure to the foundational words that are essential to reading and talking about science.
Available as a Storia e-book

Genre Connections

Smart Words Science Reader #15: Tornadoes

Ages: 6–9 **Grades:** 1–4
Lexile Measure®: 1000L **Pages:** 32
Guided Reading Level: S

The United States gets an average of 1,000 tornadoes a year—that's more than any other country! These twisting columns of air leave massive destruction in their wake. Learn how they start, where they hit, what types there are, how they are measured, and ways to stay safe in tornado conditions. Packed with mind-blowing photos, informative illustrations and maps, and cool facts, this book also introduces 20 "smart words" that are essential for grasping exciting science concepts. **Available as a Storia e-book**

National Geographic Readers: Storms!

Miriam Goin

Ages: 6–8 **Grades:** 1–3 **Pages:** 32

What makes the wind howl? Why does thunder crash? How do snowflakes form? Learning about weather is fun with this engaging introduction to some important elements of our natural surroundings. There's even a section about weather on other planets! Readers will build weather vocabulary while learning a few fun climate-related jokes. Don't miss the weather dance at the end!
Available as a Storia e-book

Ocean Giants (Scholastic Reader Level 3)

Kate Waters

Ages: 6–8 **Grades:** 1–3
Lexile Measure®: 620L **Pages:** 48
Guided Reading Level: L

The sea is filled with many beautiful, strange, and gigantic animals. Some of these large creatures are gentle, while others can be extremely dangerous. This book tells readers all about the amazing giants of the sea, and offers many fascinating facts. Budding marine biologists will delight in the book's colorful photos and are sure to be surprised by the information about these enormous creatures.
Available as a Storia e-book

To find PDF versions of the Storia teacher guides and links to purchase the related books, visit: ***http://teacher.scholastic.com/ereading-resources/***.

star (p. 4)	**planet (p. 4)**
telescope (p. 6)	**orbit (p. 8)**
gravity (p. 12)	**astronaut (p. 12)**
moon (p. 24)	**astronomer (p. 34)**

Name: _____ Date: _____

RESOURCE #2: Main Ideas

Cut out the cards and mix them up. Then match each detail with the correct main idea.

Main Idea Planets and stars are very different.	**Main Idea** Vy Canis Majoris is the largest star, not the Sun.
Detail Stars are much larger than planets.	**Detail** The sun only looks big because it's so close to us.
Main Idea The solar system includes the sun, eight planets, moons, comets, asteroids, and dwarf planets.	**Main Idea** All planets are made of rock and metal, but some are also gas and liquid.
Detail The eight planets revolve in paths around the Sun.	**Detail** Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars are made of rock and metal.