



Vocabulary

axis	the imaginary line that the Earth spins around – the moon also spins on its axis
Geocentric model	a belief people used to have that planets and the Sun orbited around Earth
Heliocentric model	the structure of the Solar System where the planets orbit around the Sun
moon	a natural satellite which orbits Earth – the Moon is not a planet
orbit	as a verb it means to move around something – as a noun, it refers to the path that the Earth follows around the Sun
planet	a sphere that moves around the Sun – the Earth is a planet
rotate	to circle around a centre point e.g. Earth rotates on its own axis
satellite	any object or body in space that orbits something else, the Moon is a satellite of Earth
solar system	a star and the planets that orbit it
spherical body	a spherical object is sphere-shaped, like a ball
star	a giant sphere of gas held together by its own gravity
sun	a huge star (source of light) that Earth and the other planets in our solar system orbit around

The Solar System

The solar system is home to our own planet (Earth) as well as seven other planets and their moons. At the centre of the Solar System is a star called the Sun.

Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars are rocky planets. They are mostly made up of metal and rock. Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune are mostly made up of gases (helium and hydrogen).



Katherine Johnson (1918—2020)

Katherine studied how to use geometry for space travel. She figured out the paths for the spacecraft to orbit Earth and to land on the Moon. Later, her maths helped send astronauts to the Moon and back.



Day and Night

Every 24 hours, Earth rotates on its axis. This rotation causes the Sun to appear to move across the sky and is what causes the cycle of day and night (as one side faces the Sun and the other side faces away from the Sun). The side facing the Sun will be experiencing daytime, as it is lit and heated by sunlight. The side facing away from the Sun will be experiencing night time, as it is in shadow.

The Movement of the Moon



The Moon orbits Earth in an oval-shaped path while spinning on its axis. At various times in a month, the Moon appears to be different shapes. This is because as the Moon rotates round Earth so the sun's light reflects from part of its surface.

The Order of the Planets

