



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# The Sun

**Learn all about the sun in our Solar System and answer the questions that follow.**

The Sun is our nearest star. The Sun provides us with light and heat. It also gives out dangerous ultraviolet light which causes sunburn and may cause cancer. Without the Sun there would be no daylight and our planet would be a dark and frozen world. We would have no oceans or life on Earth.

The Sun makes up around 99.86% of the Solar System's mass. The Sun is 865,000 miles wide which is 110 times wider than the Earth. It weighs 2 million-trillion-trillion-trillion kilograms which is as much as 330,000 Earths. About 1,300,000 Earths would fit inside the Sun. Around 74% of the Sun's mass is made up of hydrogen. Helium makes up around 24% while heavier elements such as oxygen, carbon, iron and neon make up the remaining percentage.

The Sun seems small when seen at sunrise or sunset, but this is only because the Sun lies about 150 million kilometers away from us. At this distance, it takes about 8 minutes for sunlight to reach us even though it is travelling at about 300,000 kilometers per second. This means that we see the sunset eight minutes after the event has actually taken place!

The Sun's surface temperature is around 5500 degrees Celsius which is 9941 degrees Fahrenheit. This is hotter than anything imaginable. About 30,000 times hotter than boiling water. The Sun's core is around 13,600,000 degrees Celsius!

Because of the Sun's huge influence on Earth, many early cultures saw the Sun as a god. For example, Ancient Egyptians had a sun god called Ra while in Aztec mythology there is a sun god named Tonatiuh.

## Questions

1. What is 74% of the Sun's mass made up of? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How far away is the Sun? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How hot is the core of the Sun? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How long does it take sunlight to reach us? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What would happen if we didn't have the Sun? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many Earths could fit in the Sun? \_\_\_\_\_