

Station # 1 Mercury

Number of steps from the Sun sign to the Mercury sign: _____



What are some interesting things you learned about Mercury as you read the sign at this station?

Examine the model of Mercury:



How does this model of Mercury compare to the model of the Sun?



Based on the information given on the sign at this station and using your imagination – if you were standing on the surface of Mercury, what do you think you would observe? What might you feel, smell, see, hear and taste? [Note: the gravity on Mercury is 38% of Earth's.]



Round Robin:

In a group of four, take turns sharing each individual's imaginary observations from the surface of Mercury.

Go around the group until everyone has had a turn to share all of their observations. If there is time, share any other ideas that were thought of during the sharing.

Count the number of steps that you take as you walk from the Mercury sign to the Venus sign. Record the number at the top of the Venus Traveler's Log page.



Mercury Station #1

A World of Extremes Extremely...

- ✓ **Fast** – Mercury's year is a mere 88 Earth Days
- ✓ **Slow** – Mercury rotates so slowly on its axis that sunrise to sunset takes 177 Earth days. This means that Mercury's day is longer than its year.
- ✓ **Hot** – Cooked by day to 800°F, lead would run like water over Mercury's surface.
- ✓ **Cold** – Frozen by night, temperatures plunge to -300°F!
- ✓ **Small** – It is only one third the size of Earth.
- ✓ **Close** – The Sun appears almost three times larger in Mercury's sky than in Earth's sky.
- ✓ **Lonely** – Mercury has no moons.
- ✓ **Dense** – Small, yet compact, Mercury's iron core is roughly 75% of its volume.
- ✓ **Wrinkled** – When Mercury's molten interior cooled, the planet shrank, producing wrinkles in its crust similar to the skin of a dried apple.

Standing on Mercury, you would experience a cratered world similar to our Moon. Mercury's dust covered hills have been eroded from the constant bombardment of meteorites. Since there is no atmosphere, the sky would always be black and the stars would always be visible. As you gaze out into space, you might see two bright objects. One is cream-colored Venus and the other is blue Earth!

Mercury's Interior

Mercury has an unusually large iron core for its size. The core is about the size of our own Moon.

