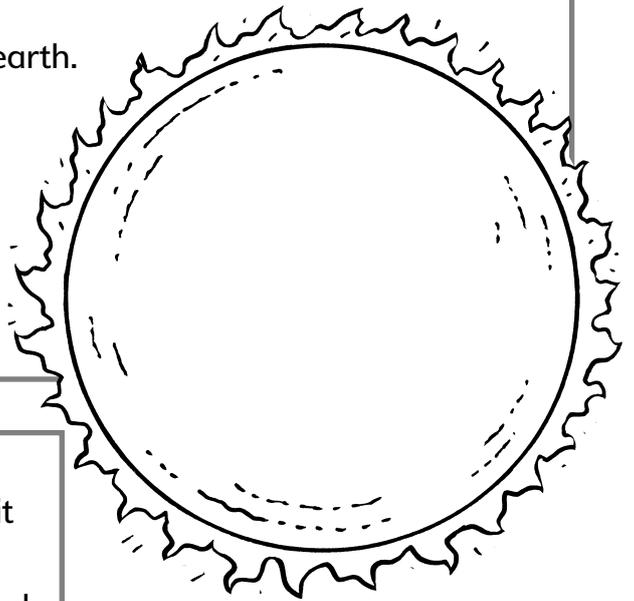


# Sun, Earth and Moon

## The sun

The sun is a star. It is the nearest star to the earth. Several planets travel around the sun. We say they 'orbit' the sun. The planets, including Earth, Venus, Mercury, Mars, Saturn and Jupiter, form what is known as the 'solar system'\*



## The earth

The earth is the planet on which we live and it is the only planet that can support life. The word 'earth' is sometimes written with a capital letter, Earth, especially when included in a list with the other planets of the solar system.

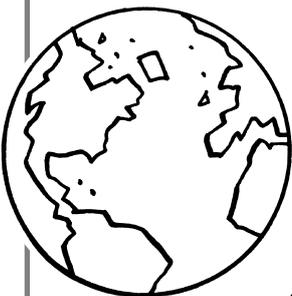
Two planets, Mercury and Venus, are closer to the sun than Earth is so we say that Earth is the third planet from the sun. The other planets are all further away from the sun than Earth is.

The earth is approximately 149,600,000 kilometres from the sun – that is 149.6 million kilometres. The diameter of the earth at the equator is 12,756 kilometres.

Approximately three quarters of the earth is covered by water. The surface of the earth is called its crust.

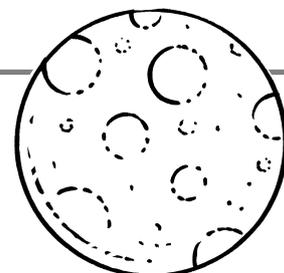
The crust covers the layer called the mantle and the mantle surrounds the central part called the core.

The earth takes one day to spin around on its own axis and it takes one year to orbit the sun.



## The moon

The moon is not a star and it is not a planet. It is a satellite of the earth – in other words it orbits the earth. The moon takes approximately one month to orbit the earth. The moon is approximately 384,000 kilometres from the earth. The diameter of the moon is 3,476 kilometres.



\* The word solar means relating to the sun.