



# Sorting the Solar System

Our Solar System contains objects ranging in size and composition from microscopic dust all the way up to the Sun. Investigate the characteristics of a variety of these objects and use your scientific skills to sort them into categories of your making.

## Materials

Solar System cards (pages 3-12)

Scissors

## Directions

1. **Print** the Solar System cards, single-sided and in color.
  - a. **Cut** each page along the solid black lines into three strips, so that the image and object description are on the same strip.
  - b. **Fold** each strip in half along the dotted black line, making two-sided cards.  
*Optional:* Paste or tape the blank sides together.
2. **Read** the Solar System object cards to learn more about the variety of planets, asteroids, comets, and more in our Solar System.
3. **Sort** the objects into categories based on their characteristics. Scientists sort things by their characteristics—size, composition, and position are examples of categorizing things. It's up to you to determine what categories to create.
4. When you have completed sorting the objects, **select** one card and describe how you categorized it.
  - a. What characteristics does it share with the others in that category?
  - b. Could the object fit into more than one category you have created?



5. *Bonus:* With your friends or family, play a guessing game with the objects on the cards.  
*Optional:* Just use the information printed on the card or spend a little bit of time researching the objects together as a group to learn more about each one first.
  - a. Player 1: Pick an object card. Don't let the others see what it is!
  - b. Remaining players: Take turns asking player 1 yes or no questions about the object in the card. When a player has a guess as to what the object is, ask player 1.
  - c. The person who guesses correctly becomes player 1 and gets to pick the next object. Continue this until all object cards are used.

*[This activity and the sorting cards](#) were originally created by Night Sky Network Resources, for educational use only.*