

## Planetary RAFT

### **Overview:**

Students choose a planet to study and conduct an Internet or library search for information on the planet. Students choose a specific point of view when writing about planets other than Earth for specific audiences using a variety of formats.

### **Objectives:**

The student will:

- conduct an Internet or library search on a planet;
- consider point of view, purpose, audience and format when writing about a chosen planet;
- write a composition;
- cite sources; and
- revise and edit.

### **Materials:**

- *Aurora Alive* multimedia video playlist
- Thesaurus
- STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET: “Planetary RAFT”

### **Activity Procedure:**

1. Plan for access to the Internet or library for research.
2. Hand out the STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET: “Planetary RAFT.”
3. Explain that students will choose and research a planet (besides Earth) and then they will write about the planet while considering RAFT. RAFT stands for **R**ole, **A**udience, **F**ormat and **T**opic.
4. Explain that students should research their chosen planet, take notes and cite their sources. Three sources need to be cited in their essay.
5. Before writing the essay, students should choose A, B or C (Tour Operator, Student or Travel Agent) on the RAFT chart on the STUDENT INFORMATION SHEET. They should consider their role by taking a few notes about their chosen persona. They should also think about their audience, format and specific topic through which they will write about their chosen planets.
6. If needed, discuss other aspects of writing and researching, such as: note-taking; plagiarism; paragraph form; organization; voice (varies in choice of roles); or format for listing sources.
7. Each finished product should include an illustration.
8. Allow time for revision.
9. Student work may be presented orally, or posted on a bulletin board, or both.

### **Answers to Student Worksheet:**

*Compositions will vary in content, but should contain at least four paragraphs with complete sentences and logical topic development.*

# Planetary RAFT

**Directions:**

1. Choose a planet (besides Earth) to research. Use the Internet or the school library to research the planet selected. Think about what is interesting about that planet. Some possibilities may be the size of the planet, distance from the sun, presence of atmosphere, hottest and coldest temperatures, moons, and comparison to Earth.
2. Find at least three information sources and take notes to use when writing. The *Aurora Alive* playlist may be used as a source. Be sure to write down all sources, as this will need to be included at the end of the essay. The following websites are good places to start:

Armett, W.A. (1994-2006). The *nine 8 planets: a multimedia tour of the solar system*.  
<http://www.nineplanets.org>

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). (2007). *Solar system exploration: planets*. <http://solarsystem.nasa.gov/planets/index.cfm>

National Air and Space Museum. (n.d.) *Exploring the planets*.  
<http://www.nasm.si.edu/research/ceps/etp/etp.htm>

3. Choose a way to share the information from the choices below, and circle the letter of that choice.

Choice	Role	Audience	Format	Topic
A	Tour Operator	Tourists	Brochure	Check out this beautiful place!
B	Student on a School Trip	Family Member	Letter	Dazzle them (or complain) about the planet.
C	Space Travel Agent	Humans from Earth	Flyer or Advertisement	Warn them about the dangers of traveling on the planet.

4. Before writing, think about the chosen role. What is that person like? What are his or her feelings and goals related to this piece of writing? Write down a few notes about the person in that role.
5. Write about the planet in the format chosen on the RAFT chart above (brochure, letter or flyer). Be sure to consider the role, audience format and topic. The final product must contain:
  - at least four paragraphs
  - at least one illustration or picture
  - a list of sources (at least three)
6. Revise the rough draft and create a finished product.