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Amazing Ants: Tiny but Mighty

NATURE'S PUZZLE:

What Happens
When a Piece
is Missing?

ANIMAL STORIES AROUND THE WORLD The Narwhal

Spay,
Neuter,
Sterilisation
- What Does
It Mean?

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Amazing Ants: **Tiny** but **Mighty**

Strength Champions

Ants are known for their incredible strength. Some species can carry up to 50 times their own body weight. Imagine if you could lift a car just by using your muscles! This strength helps ants carry food and building materials back to their nest to share with the whole colony.

The Queen's Role

The queen is much bigger than the other ants and spends most of her life laying eggs. A queen can live for many years—sometimes up to 30 years—and can lay thousands of eggs during her lifetime. Without the queen, the colony cannot continue, so she is always well protected by the other ants.

Life in the Colony

Ant colonies can be very large, sometimes with thousands or even millions of ants. Each ant in the colony has a special job. Worker ants collect food, look after baby ants, and build or repair the nest. Soldier ants protect the colony from enemies, like other insects. The queen ant is the most important member because she lays all the eggs to keep the colony growing.

Ant Talk

Ants don't have mouths to talk with like we do. Instead, they use special chemicals called pheromones to send messages to one another. For example, if an ant finds a tasty treat, it leaves a trail of pheromones to guide its friends to the food. This teamwork is why you often see ants walking in long, straight lines.

Thousands of Types

There are more than 12,000 different species of ants! Each species is unique, with some being tiny, like ghost ants, while others, like bullet ants, can grow up to 2.5 centimetres long and have a painful sting.

Homes of All Kinds

Ants build nests in many different places. Underground nests have tunnels and chambers where the ants live, store food, and care for the young. Some ants, like red wood ants, build large mounds out of dirt and leaves. Tree-dwelling ants make their homes in the trunks of trees, using leaves or wood.

Super Ant Senses

Ants might not have ears, but they can "hear" by picking up vibrations in the ground with their legs. This helps them sense danger or find food. Ants also have antennae, which are like their super-smelling and feeling tools. With these, ants can sense smells and touch to navigate their world.

Why are ants important?

Food for Other Animals

Ants are an important part of the food chain. Many animals, like birds, lizards, and even some mammals, eat ants to stay healthy and strong. This helps keep the food chain balanced.

Nature's Clean-Up Crew

Ants help keep the environment clean by eating leftover food, dead insects, and plants. This means they act as little cleaners, making sure the ground isn't covered with rotting waste.

Soil Helpers

Ants dig tunnels in the soil to build their nests. These tunnels help make the soil loose, which is good for plants because it allows air and water to reach their roots more easily. This digging helps to keep the soil healthy and full of nutrients.

Pest Control

Some ants help control the population of other insects by hunting and eating them. This is good for farmers and gardeners because it means fewer pests that might harm their plants and crops.

Guide the ant through the maze and help it find the food.

NATURE'S PUZZLE:

What Happens When a Piece Is Missing?

Imagine an ecosystem as a giant puzzle. Each animal and plant is a piece of that puzzle, and together they complete the picture.

Every species in an ecosystem is like a puzzle piece—they all fit together to keep nature in balance. If we remove just one species, the entire ecosystem can be affected.

Lets have a look at a very basic food chain. If we remove one, it can affect all the others.

Let's see how!

What happens if we take out the LION?

If the lions disappear, the antelope population might grow out of control. Too many antelopes could eat all the grass and bushes, leaving the land bare and lifeless. Lions keep antelopes on the move because the antelopes know they could be hunted. They do not stay in one place for too long. But if there are no lions, the antelopes feel safe and stop moving as much. They eat all the small bushes and plants in that area. New bushes can not grow because the antelopes keep eating the young shoots. Over time, the landscape changes. Areas that used to have lots of bushes might become bare and dry.



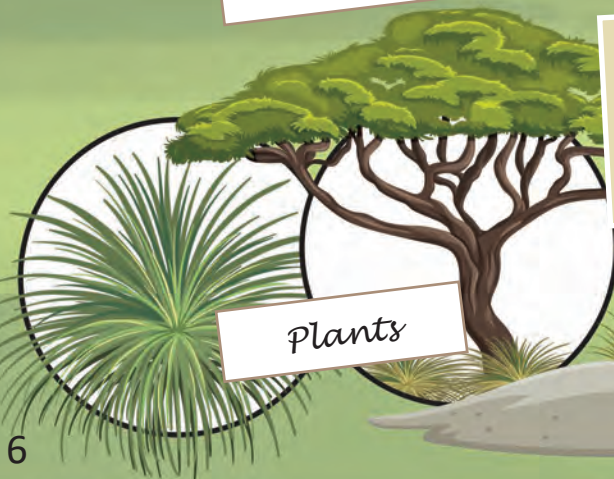
What Happens if We Take Out the ANTELOPE?

If there are not enough antelopes, perhaps due to hunting or diseases, the lions will not have enough to eat. Without lions, antelopes might multiply too quickly in the future, eating all the grass and bushes. This will have a massive impact on countless other animals, from insects to antelopes and beyond.



What happens if we take out the PLANTS?

If the grass dies out (perhaps because of a drought or too much grazing), the antelopes won't have enough to eat. They'll grow weaker, and fewer will survive. That means the lions will struggle too, as their food source becomes scarce.



The Amazing Balance of Nature

This simple example shows a small ecosystem, but real ones are much more complex, with countless plants, animals, and microorganisms all interacting in fascinating ways.

Even in this tiny scenario, everything is connected. Every living thing—whether a plant, insect, or animal—plays an essential role in keeping the ecosystem balanced.

We might not always see the importance of certain creatures or plants, but they all have a purpose. Worms keep soil healthy, helping plants grow, and bees pollinate flowers so fruits and seeds can form.

If even one species disappears, the balance is disrupted. It's a powerful reminder of how delicate nature is and why we must protect every part of it.



Maths Quiz

1. A herd of 45 antelopes is grazing near the river. A lion scares away 12 of them, and another 8 move to a new area to find fresh grass. How many antelopes are left grazing near the river? ____ antelopes
2. There are 36 antelopes in one area and 24 in another. If half of the total herd moves to graze by the river, how many antelopes are now near the river? ____ antelopes
3. Each antelope eats 4 bushes a day. If there are 18 antelopes near the river, how many bushes will they eat in 5 days? ____ bushes
4. There are 72 bushes near the river, and one antelope eats 3 bushes a day. If 12 antelopes are grazing there, how many days will it take for all the bushes to be eaten? ____ days

Do you know that antelopes can change to flow of a river?

Antelopes love eating grass and bushes. Normally, this is fine because nature has a balance—enough grass for the antelopes and enough antelopes for the lions to hunt. But if there are no lions or other predators, or too many antelopes, they might eat too much grass. This might result in:

- The soil being left bare, with nothing to hold it in place.
- When it rains, the loose soil washes away because there are no grass or roots to stop it.

When soil gets washed away, it ends up in rivers. Over time, this can:

- Make the river shallow and muddy because of all the soil building up.
- Change the river's shape as the water struggles to flow around the extra soil.
- Harm fish and other animals that live in the water, as they need clean, clear rivers to survive.

The Chain Reaction:

Too many antelopes → Less grass → Loose soil → Muddy rivers → Problems for river animals.

It's amazing how one small change—like having too many antelopes—can affect so many things, even the rivers! Nature works best when all the puzzle pieces are in their right place.

Not enough antelopes can also change the river's flow:

Bushes and plants can grow too large and thick. These big bushes can block rainwater from flowing freely into rivers. Over time, the bushes might even change the direction of the river, forcing the water to flow around them and slowing down the river's flow by blocking the water.

This may cause the river to split into smaller paths or take new routes around the bushes. It may also lead to flooding in areas where water gets trapped.

A delicate Balance:

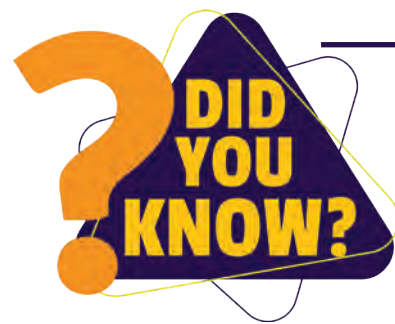
Antelopes may not seem connected to rivers, but their grazing helps keep bushes and plants in check. This balance ensures that rainwater can flow naturally, keeping rivers healthy and flowing smoothly.

It's amazing how everything in nature is linked—even antelopes and rivers!

This awareness raising activity has been realised with support from:



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Nest Design for Protection

Birds have evolved many clever strategies to protect their young, and building a nest with two entrances is one of them. This design is particularly effective against predators, such as snakes, which often rely on direct access to raid nests.

The Decoy Entrance:

The decoy entrance is often more visible or easier to access. Predators like snakes are drawn to this opening, assuming it leads to the eggs or chicks. However, this entrance usually leads to a dead-end or an empty chamber, frustrating the predator.

The Real Entrance:

The true entrance is smaller, less visible, or hidden within the structure of the nest. This passage leads directly to the nesting chamber where the eggs or chicks are kept. It's often positioned in a way that only the parent bird can navigate easily.

Benefits of This Strategy

Confusion for Predators: By dividing attention, the nest increases the likelihood that a predator gives up before finding the real chamber.

Time for Escape: If a predator attacks through the decoy entrance, the chicks or eggs in the real chamber remain safe, giving parents time to intervene or distract the predator.

Birds Known for Dual-Entrance Nests

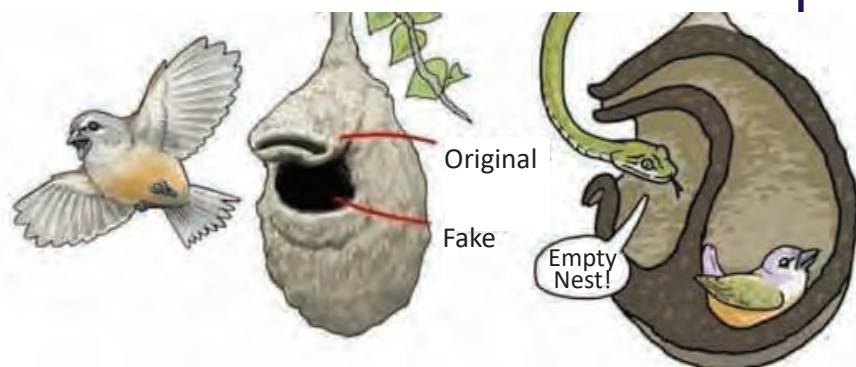
Weaver Birds: Famous for their complex, woven nests, some species build structures with multiple chambers and entrances for protection.

Tailorbirds: These birds sew leaves together to create a hidden chamber for their chicks, sometimes incorporating fake entrances to mislead predators.

Sunbirds and Warblers: Some species use this tactic in their elaborate nest-building processes.

Materials Used

These nests are typically made from natural materials like grasses, leaves, twigs, and mud. The structure is tightly woven to ensure durability and stability. Some birds even use materials like spider silk for added flexibility.



Word Scramble

Use the letters to spell the word.

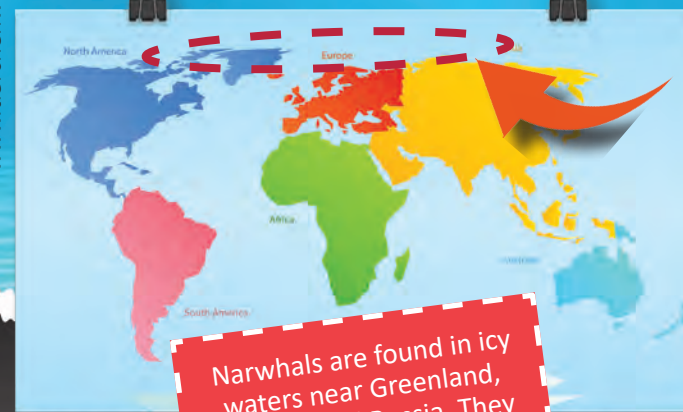


ANIMAL STORIES AROUND THE WORLD

The Narwhal

Narwhals are often called the "unicorns of the sea" because of their long tusk, which looks like a unicorn's horn. The narwhal is a type of whale. It is a special kind of whale called a toothed whale because it has teeth. They are truly one-of-a-kind creatures that make the icy Arctic waters very special places!

www.tierchenwelt.de/zahnwale/556-narwal.html



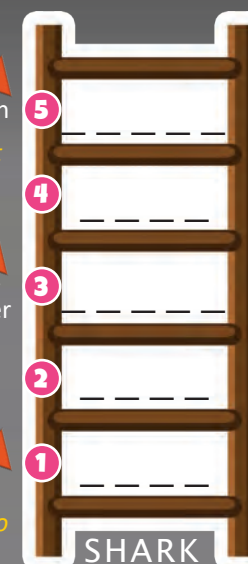
Narwhals are found in icy waters near Greenland, Canada, and Russia. They are perfectly adapted to cold climates.

Unlike most whales, narwhals don't have a dorsal fin (that's the one on the back). This helps them swim under thick ice without getting stuck.

The tusk is actually a long tooth that can grow up to 3 metres long! Not all narwhals have tusks – usually, it's the males, but some females have them too.

WORD LADDER GAME

Start at the bottom with the word SHARK.



5 What do you find in the ocean? Take away the last three letters. Add three new letters.

3 When the weather brings wind, thunder and lightning. Replace the third letter and add a letter at the end.

1 This grows on the outside of a tree. Take away the first two letters, then add one.

Narwhals change colour as they age! Young narwhals are bluish-grey, adults are spotted black and white, and older narwhals turn almost completely white.

Narwhals live in groups called pods, which can range from a few narwhals to hundreds! They love to travel and hunt together.

Scientists aren't completely sure why narwhals have tusks. Some believe they use them to sense their surroundings, while others think they help in showing off.

Narwhals are amazing divers! They can dive as deep as 1,500 metres below the surface to hunt for food like fish and other ocean animals.

4 The blanket feels on a cold night. Take away the first three letters. Add two new letters.

2 You can see it during the night. Take away the first and the last letters. Include two new letters in front of the word.

FUN FACTS

Praying Mantis:

A Bug with a **BIG** Job

FUN FACTS

AMAZING MOVEMENTS

Unlike most insects, praying mantises can turn their heads side to side to look around. They are one of the few insects with this ability!

WHY THE NAME?

Praying mantises get their name because their front legs are held together like they are praying.

FROM EGG TO MANTIS

A female praying mantis lays her eggs in a foamy case, which hardens to protect the eggs. When they hatch, tiny mantises, called nymphs, emerge and look like mini versions of adults.

BIG EYES, GREAT VISION

They have large eyes that give them excellent eyesight, allowing them to spot movement from far away.

A BITE TO WATCH OUT FOR?

Although they look fierce, praying mantises are harmless to humans.

Can you find the trail that is safe?
You start on the tile with the arrow.
Find the trail to the bottom right corner. As you move through the garden, you must add up the numbers of the tiles that you land on.
When the total of these tiles is the same as in the finish line, then you have found the correct trail!

Example:

5	3	1	8
9	5	10	6
10	2	7	1
10	10	10	10
			+ 72

5	3	1	8
9	5	10	6
10	2	7	1
10	10	10	10
			+ 72

5	2	3	4
3	10	4	5
10	6	5	10
5	9	3	4
			+ 60

NATURE'S PEST CONTROL
Farmers like praying mantises because they eat pests that can damage crops.

LIVING SOLO

Praying mantises are solitary creatures. They spend most of their lives alone, only coming together to mate.

Help the mantis navigate through the garden and stay safe from spiders and other threats.



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Spay, Neuter, Sterilisation – What Does It Mean?

Sometimes, pet owners choose to have their cats, dogs, or other animals spayed, neutered, or sterilised. But what do these words mean? Let's break it down in a way that's easy to understand!



Spaying (for girls):

Spaying is a special surgery for female animals that stops them from having babies. A vet (an animal doctor) does this to help keep pets healthy and prevent too many animals without homes.

Sterilisation:

Sterilisation is just another way of saying spaying or neutering. It means stopping animals from having babies, whether they're boys or girls.

Neutering (for boys):

Neutering is like spaying, but it is for male animals. It is a small operation that stops them from making babies.

Why is it important?

It helps control the number of animals in the world so there are fewer strays (animals without homes).

It keeps pets healthier and can stop some illnesses.

It stops male pets from wandering far away or fighting.

Getting your pet spayed or neutered is a way to show love and care. It helps them live a happy, healthy life.



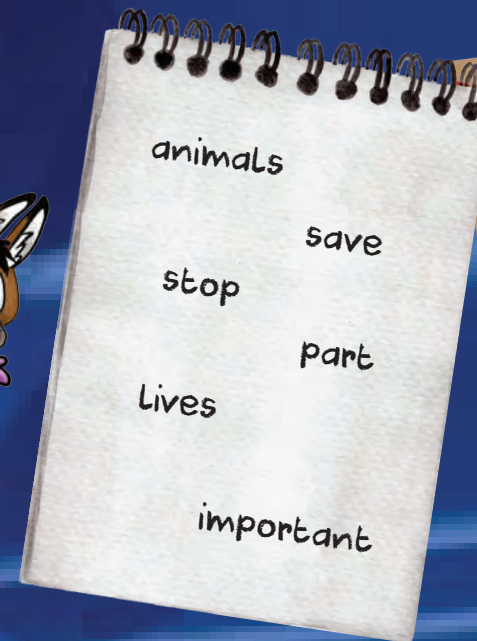
Let us find out how quickly one unspayed cat can multiply in just 10 months!



In this diagram, each litter consists of an average of 2 males and 2 females. The reproduction numbers for dogs after 10 months are similar.

Postcard from Pako

Someone has erased some words from Pako's postcard, making it unreadable. Use the words in the notebook to discover the message.



EXPLORE THE SOLAR SYSTEM

MERCURY QUIZ

Mercury is the closest planet to the Sun and...

- A) it is the hottest planet.
- B) it is NOT the hottest planet.
- C) it has the same temperature as Earth.

Mercury is the smallest planet in our Solar System and you could...

- A) fit over 2 Mercurys inside Earth.
- B) fit over 18 Mercurys inside Earth.
- C) fit over 42 Mercurys inside Earth.

Mercury zooms around the sun at about...

- A) 7 km/s
 - B) 27 km/s
 - C) 47 km/s
- ...making it the fastest planet in the Solar System.*

Temperatures on Mercury can be as hot as...

- A) 430°C
- B) 130°C
- C) 30°C

...during the day.

At night, it gets super cold—down to...

- A) -10°C.
- B) -80°.
- C) -180°.

A day on Mercury (sunrise to sunrise) is Earth days long!

- A) 17
- B) 76
- C) 176



VENUS QUIZ

It's the brightest planet in the night sky and can often be seen without a telescope.

- A) True
- B) False

The thick clouds on Venus are made mostly of, which traps heat like a giant greenhouse.

- A) Water
- B) Carbon Dioxide
- C) Oxygen

A spacecraft would survive on Venus' surface due to the heat and pressure.

- A) without any problems
- B) about a month
- C) only a few hours

The tallest mountain on Venus is Maxwell Montes, which is

- A) 100 m high
- B) taller than Mount Everest.
- C) 30 cm high.

The pressure on Venus' surface is 90 times stronger than on Earth, like being deep under the ocean!

- A) True
- B) False

The clouds on Venus move

- A) not at all.
- B) only slow.
- C) incredibly fast, creating strong winds.

Where is the moon?

You might have noticed the Moon glowing brightly in the night sky, but did you know it's not officially part of the solar system? That might sound surprising! Let's explore why:

The Moon is a natural satellite, which means it orbits around Earth, not the Sun. The Solar System includes the Sun and everything that travels around it, like planets, asteroids, and comets. Since the Moon goes around Earth and not the Sun, it's not counted as a separate part of the Solar System. Instead, it's part of Earth's "team"!

Your Stargazing Expert



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It is a busy day on the farm. Can you help Pako to spot 10 differences?



HOW TO TAKE CARE OF AN OLD DOG



Just like people, dogs get older and may need extra care. If you have an old dog, here are some simple and important tips to keep them happy and healthy:

1. Be Gentle and Kind

Older dogs might not have as much energy as puppies, and their bodies can feel sore. Always handle them gently and do not play too rough.

2. Healthy Food and Water

Give your dog healthy food that is easy to chew. Your vet can help you choose the right food. Always keep fresh water nearby so your dog does not get thirsty.

3. Regular Vet Visits

Old dogs need check-ups at the vet more often. The vet will make sure your dog is healthy and can help with any aches or pains.

4. Soft Bed to Sleep On

Older dogs may feel stiff and need a cosy place to rest. A soft, warm bed will help them feel comfortable.

5. Short Walks and Gentle Exercise

Old dogs still need exercise, but not too much. Take them on short, slow walks to keep them healthy and happy.

6. Extra Love and Attention

Older dogs love cuddles and being close to you. Spend time with them and show them lots of love.

7. Help Them Feel Safe

Sometimes older dogs can not see or hear as well. Make sure your home is safe and easy for them to move around in.

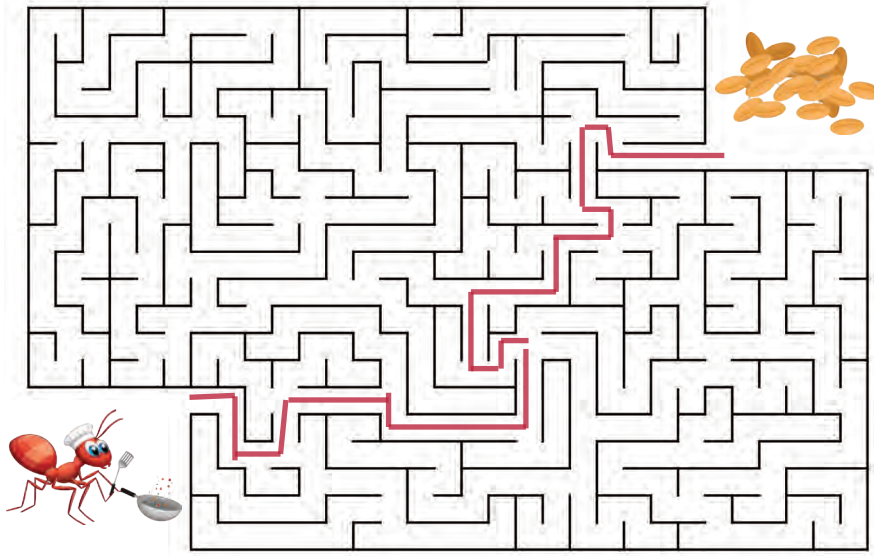
Taking care of an old dog is a wonderful way to show love to your furry friend. They've given you lots of happy memories, and now you can make their golden years special!



Happy Dog School

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WORD LADDER GAME

Start at the bottom with the word SHARK.



- 1 This grows on the outside of a tree.
Take away the first two letters, then add one.
- 2 You can see it during the night.
Take away the first and the last letters. Include two new letters in front of the word.
- 3 When the weather brings wind, thunder and lightning.
Replace the third letter and add a letter at the end.
- 4 The blanket feels _____ on a cold night.
Take away the first three letters. Add two new letters.
- 5 What large animal do you find in the ocean?
Take away the last three letters. Add four new letters.

1. $45 - 12 - 8 = 25$
Answer: 25 antelopes

2. $36 + 24 = 60$
Half of 60 = 30
Answer: 30 antelopes

3. $18 \text{ antelopes} \times 4 \text{ bushes/day} = 72 \text{ bushes/day}$
 $72 \text{ bushes/day} \times 5 \text{ days} = 360 \text{ bushes}$
Answer: 360 bushes

4. $72 \text{ bushes} / (12 \text{ antelopes} \times 3 \text{ bushes/day}) = 2 \text{ days}$
Answer: 2 days



MERCURY QUIZ

Mercury is the closest planet to the Sun and...

- A) it is the hottest planet
- B) it is NOT the hottest planet.
- C) it has the same temperature as Earth.

Mercury is the smallest planet in our Solar System and you could...

- A) fit over 2 Mercurys inside Earth.
- B) fit over 18 Mercurys inside Earth.
- C) fit over 42 Mercurys inside Earth.

Mercury zooms around the sun at about...

- A) 7 km/s (kilometres per second)
 - B) 27 km/s (kilometres per second)
 - C) 47 km/s (kilometres per second)
- ...making it the fastest planet in the Solar System.

Temperatures on Mercury can be as hot as...

- A) 430°C
- B) 130°C
- C) 30°C

...during the day.

At night, it gets super cold — down to...

- A) -10°C.
- B) -80°C.
- C) -180°C.

Water freezes at 0° C, so these figures are all minus or below freezing!

A day on Mercury (sunrise to sunrise) is Earth days long!

- A) 17
- B) 76
- C) 176

VENUS QUIZ

It's the brightest planet in the night sky and can often be seen without a telescope.

- A) True
- B) False

The thick clouds on Venus are made mostly of, which traps heat like a giant greenhouse.

- A) water
- B) carbon dioxide
- C) oxygen

A spacecraft would survive on Venus' surface due to the heat and pressure.

- A) without any problems
- B) about a month
- C) only a few hours

The tallest mountain on Venus is Maxwell Montes, which is

- A) 100 m high
- B) taller than Mount Everest
- C) 30 cm high

The pressure on Venus' surface is 75 times stronger than on Earth, like being deep under the ocean!

- A) True
- B) False

The clouds on Venus move

- A) not at all.
- B) only slowly.
- C) incredibly fast, creating strong winds.



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