

California Content Standards — Grade 5

Standard Set 5. Earth Sciences (The Solar System)

5. The solar system consists of planets and other bodies that orbit the Sun in predictable paths.
- 5.a. Students know the Sun, an average star, is the central and largest body in the solar system and is composed primarily of hydrogen and helium.

Science and Literacy Strategies

Literacy Strategy: Comprehension Check: Question.

Standard 5.a. — The Sun and Earth

Our solar system, as we understand it today, consists of the Sun (which we call our star), nine planets and their moons, and other objects that roam outer space. The Sun radiates its energy in all directions through space. This energy, called radiant or heat energy, provides all the heat and light for the planets in our solar system.

The Sun is considered a star because it is made of gases, called hydrogen and helium, just like other bodies in space that make their own energy. Hydrogen is a lightweight gas that reacts with other elements. Helium is a lightweight gas that does not react easily with other elements. The core, or the inside of the Sun is extremely hot. The reason for this is the hydrogen atoms combine to form helium atoms and release a tremendous amount of energy. The Sun's energy is stronger than any type of energy on Earth.

Comprehension Check: Question. Why do we call the Sun our "star"?

The Sun and Earth have a special relationship. The Earth revolves around the Sun; it receives heat and light necessary for life to exist. Do you remember when we learned about living organisms and the things they need to live and grow? Light was one of those important ingredients, and light from the Sun provides plant life with this essential ingredient.

AH HA! Making a Connection in Learning — When you make a connection like this one, stop and write it down.

What is the connection between the Sun and living organisms on Earth?
