



wild dog

**Wild Dog Books
Teachers' Notes**

Going Supernova — The Solar System

Synopsis

The Solar System takes up an enormous expanse of space, though in reality it is only a tiny fraction of the universe. It is where our home, planet Earth, calls home. It is a collection of planets, moons, asteroids, comets, gas and dust orbiting a central star. This star, our Sun, is crucial to life on Earth as it provides us with light, heat and energy. While there is much we know about space, it still represents a great source of mystery and wonder. Learn all about our closest neighbours, the Sun and the major planets, and just how different life can be in the Solar System.

Writing style

Going Supernova–The Solar System has been designed with the needs of early readers and reluctant readers in mind. Text is succinct and simple, with no more than a few sentences on a page. The large format images relate directly to the text, so young readers have multiple entry points to engaging with the information. Additional fact boxes highlight pieces of information that a young reader would find fascinating. There is a glossary and index in the back of the book, which will aid young readers in developing the tools of research and analysis.

Photographic style

The *Going Supernova* series uses images that bring the viewer close to the subject that is being discussed. These images also have the advantage of being static, giving the reader the opportunity to explore the image and look at the subject matter and its features in detail. A graphic device used throughout *The Solar System* further aids the reader by isolating the subject matter that is in focus. The images are also strongly composed and clearly printed with bright strong colours to increase the appeal to visual readers.

Study notes

Themes:

- The miracle of existence on Earth
- The importance of water
- The vastness of space
- The Solar System
- The Universe
- The importance of the Sun
- What it would be like to live on other planets

Curriculum link: Literacy

Before reading *Going Supernova–The Solar System*:

- Brainstorm what students know about the Solar System. Can they name the objects that make up the Solar System? Can they name all the planets? How do

objects travel/move in the Solar System? How many stars are there in the Solar System?

While reading *Going Supernova–The Solar System*:

- Ask the students to take turns reading a paragraph aloud to the rest of the class. Where appropriate, ask the students what they think certain words may mean.

Curriculum Theme: Critical and Creative Thinking

After reading *Going Supernova–The Solar System* ask the students the following questions:

- Why is the Sun important to the Solar System?
- Why is the Sun so important to Earth?
- What is the difference between the Terrestrial planets and the Gas Giants?
- Is life possible on other planets? Why/why not?
- How big is the Solar System?
- In the same way the planets orbit the Sun, does the Solar System orbit something else? Or does it remain stationary?
- Can we see any of the planets when we look at the night sky?

Curriculum link: ICT Capability

After reading *Going Supernova–The Solar System*:

- Organise the class into small groups. Assign each group a different planet and ask them to research that planet online. Working together they should answer questions such as: When was it first discovered? By who? Have humans visited the planet surface? Has anything visited the planet surface e.g. space crafts/probes? Could humans live on this planet? Is there any form of life on this planet?
- Ask the children to look for and print different images relating to their planet e.g. where it is located in relation to the other planets, its location in the night sky, close-up satellite images etc.
- Ask each group to create a poster collage. Ask them to attach the images they found and to write a short sentence explaining the relationship between each image and the chosen planet. All members of the group then take turns presenting their findings to the rest of the class.

Curriculum Theme: Personal and Social Capability

After reading *Going Supernova–The Solar System*:

- Organise the class into two groups. In one group, ask the students to work as a team to construct a word finder puzzle. Ask each student to suggest an appropriate word about the Solar System using words they have learned from the book e.g. Mars, orbit, diameter etc. Once completed, print copies for the other group to complete.
- In the second group, students should work as a team to create a trivia bingo game. Ask each student to suggest a fact they found surprising or interesting. Combine these facts into a game for the whole class.

Find out more

- <http://solarsystem.nasa.gov/kids/>
- <http://www.esa.int/esaKIDSen/>

Marketing and promotion

Going Supernova–The Solar System is the first of the new *Going Supernova* series. Upcoming titles will include *Going Supernova–Space Exploration*, *Going Supernova–Constellations* and *Going Supernova–Moons*.