

Teaching: Mars

Teacher guide - A 55 to 70 minute lesson

Main question

What can we say about Mars using evidence? How do we distinguish an observation, a model and a conclusion?

Locate

Identify the type of body (rocky planet) and locate it in the Solar System.

Describe

Extract accurate features from a scientific fact sheet.

Compare

Compare sizes, periods, temperatures or composition with Earth.

Reason

Distinguish a fact from a simplified representation and a conclusion.

Explain and write

Support an explanation with a figure and a source; write a short exploration report.

Curriculum adaptation

Based on French Cycle 3, roughly ages 9-12, and adaptable to other primary and secondary settings. It is not an official UK or US curriculum. Choose tasks suited to your learners.

Lesson sequence

English learning edition - September 2026

0-5 min | Spark curiosity

Project the world and collect initial ideas without confirming them yet.

5-15 min | Read and locate

Identify the type of body, its location, two figures and one remarkable fact.

15-27 min | Compare

Complete the first activity page. Ask students to justify answers using data.

27-40 min | Reason

Answer the multiple-choice questions. Explain why the other options are incorrect.

40-52 min | Investigate

Analyse a scientific text and separate observations, interpretations and conclusions.

52-70 min | Write and summarise

Write the mini-mission. Finish with: I know..., my evidence is..., I wonder...

Adapt, assess and check

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Support and challenge

To support learners: read instructions aloud, explain vocabulary and allow spoken answers. To consolidate: require data in each explanation. To extend: explicitly distinguish observation, interpretation and conclusion.

Locates and classifies the body correctly. Secure / Revisit

Gives two accurate characteristics. Secure / Revisit

Supports a comparison with data. Secure / Revisit

Explains at least one limitation of the model. Secure / Revisit

Distinguishes evidence, hypothesis and proof. Secure / Revisit

Sources and limitations

NASA Science: <https://science.nasa.gov/mars/facts/>

Online fact sheet: <https://systeme-solaire-3d.fr/en/mars>

Values are rounded. The artistic view changes sizes and distances for readability. Check dated information before reusing it.

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