

Mission: Pluto

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. What type of celestial body is Pluto?

2. Where is it, or which body does it orbit?

3. Copy an important time period and say what it measures.

4. Copy a temperature or a feature of its environment.

Type	Dwarf planet
Diameter	2,377 km
Mass (Earth = 1)	0.00218 Earth masses
Average distance	39.48 AU · 5.9 billion km on average
Orbital period	≈ 248 years
Rotation	6.39 days · retrograde
Temperature	≈ -232 °C
Main orbiting bodies	Charon, Nix, Hydra, Kerberos and Styx

5. Choose two figures from the table and explain their units.

6. Explain this comparison in your own words: Its diameter is less than one fifth of Earth's.

Check and explain

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7. What is the large icy plain within Pluto's heart-shaped region called?

- A. Sputnik Planitia
- B. Olympus Mons
- C. Sea of Tranquillity
- D. Valles Marineris

8. What is its largest moon?

- A. Charon
- B. Titan
- C. Triton
- D. Io

9. In which large region of the Solar System is Pluto?

- A. The Kuiper Belt
- B. The main belt
- C. The solar corona
- D. Earth's orbit

10. Which ices are found on its surface?

- A. Nitrogen and methane
- B. Only liquid water
- C. Molten iron
- D. Sulphuric acid

11. Write two units from the table and the quantities they measure.

12. Why is an illustration not always drawn to scale?

13. Give one similarity and one difference compared with Earth.

Investigate like a scientist

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Text to analyse

Pluto is a world of ice mountains, nitrogen plains and glaciers in the Kuiper Belt. Classified as a dwarf planet by the International Astronomical Union in 2006, it remains one of the most fascinating objects explored by New Horizons. Sputnik Planitia forms the left part of the famous heart-shaped region. It contains moving ice and very few large craters, indicating a geologically young surface.

14. Copy one observation or checkable fact from the text.

15. Write a scientific question you would like to investigate.

Writing mini-mission

Imagine a spacecraft studying Pluto. Describe what it observes and what it aims to measure. Write 5 to 7 sentences using at least three scientific terms. Do not invent a solid surface on a gas giant or present a hypothesis as a fact.

Scientific terms used: _____