

# outer space

## Papier-mâché Planets

4+

### Materials

Flour  
Water  
Tub or large bowl  
Balloons in several sizes  
Newspaper cut in strips  
Paint and paintbrushes

### What to do

1. Ahead of time, mix flour and water until the mixture is the consistency of oatmeal.
2. Inflate 11 balloons to represent the planets, the sun, and the moon.
3. Show the children how to dip the strips of newspaper in the flour and water mixture, then lay the strips across a balloon in several layers. Cover the entire surface of the balloon. Allow sufficient time for drying.
4. When the balloons are dry, have the children paint them. Hang the balloons from the ceiling when finished.

### More to do

**More art:** Make spacesuits from paper bags. Cover with foil and cut openings for the head and arms. Use another bag for the helmet. Trim some length and cut an opening for the face.

### Related books

*Our Solar System* by Seymour Simon  
*The Planets* by Gail Gibbons

Sharon Max, St. Louis, MO

## My Own Little Planet

4+

### Materials

Sandpaper  
Construction paper in light colors  
Scissors  
Iron  
Newspaper

# outer space

## What to do

1. Beforehand, cut a circle for each child from the sandpaper, about 2" (5 cm) in diameter. Cut the same number of circles from the construction paper, about 2" (5 cm) larger than the first circle.
2. Have the children color the rough side of their sandpaper circle. Tell them to press hard and color the entire circle.
3. When they finish coloring, have the children place their circle, colored side down, on the construction paper circle. Show the children how to center their sandpaper circle on the larger one.
4. Set up the iron on a thick layer of newspaper. The iron should be handled by adults only.
5. Iron the colored circle onto the larger circle, then set the sandpaper and construction paper circles aside to cool.
6. When they have cooled, lift the sandpaper circles from the paper, leaving behind the image of the sandpaper planet.
7. Trim your paper planets, if desired, then hang them from the ceiling.

## More to do

**Dramatic play:** Use a silver thermal camping blanket for a space tent and pretend to live on another planet.

**Language:** Pretend the class is planning a trip to another planet. Ask the children to list the items they will need to bring with them. Have them dictate a letter to a friend they hope to meet in outer space. Assemble their letters in a book.

**Science:** Talk to the children about what plants need to live and how planet Earth supports life; in an experiment, put a plant in the freezer, another under a dark cover, and a third in light, but do not water. Predict what will happen, then keep a record of the children's observations.

## Related books

*I Want to Be an Astronaut* by Byron Barton

*My Picture Book of the Planets* by Nancy E. Krulik

*The Planets* by Gail Gibbons

Linda S. Andrews, Sonora, CA