



SPACE SCIENCE INSTITUTE PRESENTS  
**A FAMILY GUIDE TO MARS**



For kids ages 6-12 and the adults they learn with!

# FROM THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

## Dear Learning Enthusiast,

Welcome to the Family Guide to Mars!

This publication assumes little or no prior knowledge about Mars or astronomy in general.

We invite you to use the diverse activities and resources here to have fun learning about Mars — The Red Planet!

The Guide includes an innovative collection of puzzles, pictures, poetry, and projects, all designed to stimulate enjoyable co-learning experiences between kids aged 6-12 and the caring adults in their lives.

Much learning in life takes place in informal environments outside the classroom. We envision this Guide being of value wherever kids and adults find themselves together and excited about finding out new things.

Before getting started, we strongly urge adults to read the “Tips to Guide Your Child’s Enjoyment of Learning” (p. 4). It is very important to realize that being a good learning companion to kids is NOT the same as being the expert who tells all the answers.

Whatever your age or background, we firmly believe that just one significant experience of the joy of discovering something for yourself can vastly enhance your confidence and interest in learning for the rest of your life.

The Guide's content develops and re-enforces four overall themes:

- Comparing Earth and Mars as planets
- The importance of water to life as we know it
- The technology of Mars exploration
- Seeing Mars in Earth’s sky

Feel free to jump around — the activities in this guide need not be done sequentially. We encourage you to begin with the Fill-in-the-Blanks Game on p. 22 to warm up your minds and hearts to Mars and its place in the Universe.

Be sure to check out the [FAQ](#) at the back of the Guide, which provides general background on Mars, with questions posed as kids tend to ask them. We crafted the “[Gee Whiz Facts](#)” to elicit the irresistible urge to tell someone else about them. Look for terms from the [Glossary](#) (on p. 47) throughout the Guide — they are marked with an asterisk\*.

We want this Family Guide to be the best it can be. We sincerely hope you will explore its riches and tell us about your experience.

## The Family Guide to Mars Development Team

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