

TIPS TO GUIDE YOUR CHILD'S ENJOYMENT OF LEARNING

Be a guide on the side

This Family Guide is intended to assist you in sharing the joy of exploration and discovery with the children in your life. It is a wonderful gift to enjoy our minds at play!

1. Children are naturally curious and enthusiastic to learn about the world around them. *Listen* to their ideas and opinions – they will fascinate you! *Encourage* your child's inclination to *observe*, *wonder*, and *investigate*.

2. The resources and activities in the *Family Guide to Mars* can assist you in making enjoyable connections between Mars and our home planet, Earth. They also provide leads to learning more about the Red Planet.

3. You can be a good teacher, even if learning about Mars is new to you. Good teachers introduce ways to find the answers, rather than presenting themselves as a source of all information.

4. Help your child learn how to ask questions by asking questions yourself. You are a powerful role model. Even if you don't know the answer, you can explore *with* your child to find answers together (see facing page).

5. If you *do* know the answer, it is often valuable to ask leading questions that guide a child to discover something new for themselves.

6. Encourage your children to use different dimensions of their intelligence to record their impressions and observations. Telling stories, drawing pictures, creating poems or songs, making a photo album or collage, recording a video, and writing in a journal are all ways to remember and share information.



CAN PEOPLE LIVE ON MARS?

When you don't have all the answers...

Child: Can people live on Mars?

Adult: Well let's see... What are some things that people need in order to live?

Child: We need to have food and water.

Adult: Yes. Those are very important. What else?

Child: We need air to breathe.

Adult: Right, people need air with oxygen*.

Child: Does Mars have oxygen?

Adult: I'm not sure, but I think the air is very thin and cold. What else do people need?

Child: Maybe a house for when the weather's bad?

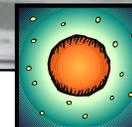
Adult: That makes sense. So does Mars have what people need to live?

Child: Well... we'd have to bring stuff along and we'd probably need spacesuits.

Adult: I bet you're right. Let's go try to find out more about Mars. Where do you think we could look?

Child: Hmm, the computer? The library or the bookstore?

Adult: Those all sound great. Let's get going!



See p. 21 for an activity related to this dialogue!

MEET ROCKY — YOUR GUIDE TO LEARNING ABOUT MARS!

Look for him throughout this Guide, as we learn more about Mars, the fourth planet from the Sun!

Hello and welcome to Mars! My name's Rocky and I'm a robotic explorer called a *rover**. My job is to roll about on the surface of Mars and help scientists back on Earth learn more about the Red Planet.

Each day, a team of scientists decides where they want me to drive and what interesting rocks they would like me to examine. I look around the scene and make images that tell them a lot about the history of Mars.

Every now and then I find a really interesting rock that holds clues to the early history of Mars, when the planet might have been warmer and wetter than it is today.

When I examine these rocks I wonder if Mars was ever able to support life — even tiny microbes*. It's an important mystery to solve!

I get all of my battery power from sunlight. The number of daylight hours on Mars is about the same as on Earth. It gets very cold at night here on the Red Planet, so I shut down most of my systems and wait for the Sun to come up again.

Hello and welcome to Mars!
My name is Rocky and I'll be your guide to learning about the Red Planet.

