

Scientists Explore the Solar System

CCSSR2—Identify ideas.

In the box next to each paragraph, draw a picture that shows what you learn.

When scientists looked at the stars long ago, they saw patterns. They did not understand everything about what they saw. So they kept looking to learn more. That is what scientists do. They ask questions and look for information to answer their questions.

1

Scientists asked questions about Earth, our planet. How old is it? How big? Where is it in space? Our planet is in a galaxy called the Milky Way. The sun is a big star in our part of this giant galaxy. Earth has many neighbors. Scientists learned that our galaxy holds millions of stars. They discovered that two other planets are closer to the sun than Earth: Mercury and Venus. Scientists use telescopes and computers to keep track of all those planets.

2

Scientists know that the sun gives Earth warmth and light. Earth orbits the sun once each year. It travels once around the sun every 365 days. The other eight planets in our solar system also orbit around the sun. Scientists found that they all travel in a pattern called an ellipse, which is a kind of oval. So at times earth is farther from the sun. Scientists figured out that Earth is cooler then.

3

Scientists have learned a lot about the history of Earth. They can tell you about life here thousands of years ago. Scientists are still learning about our planet. There is much to discover. They use telescopes, computers, and questions to learn more every year.

4

What is the central idea of this passage?
