

## Did you know?

- The Earth is not truly spherical: it bulges at the equator, meaning that it looks fatter in the middle!
- The Earth and everything on it spins through space at an average speed of approximately 1000 miles per hour. That's fast!
- The biggest impact crater on Earth is South Africa's Vredefort crater which has a diameter of around 300 km.
- What we call the geographical North Pole is actually a magnetic south pole!
- The Earth's magnetic field is caused by its spinning, splashing, molten metal core.
- Venus is often referred to as Earth's sister planet because of its similar size and mass.
- The planet Neptune is named after the Roman god of the sea.
- Titan, the largest moon of Saturn, is thought to have seas of liquid methane.
- In August 2012 the Mars rover, *Curiosity*, landed on the red planet. Moving at a top speed of 2.5 cm per second, its mission was to find out whether conditions on Mars could support microbial life.
- Mercury is the smallest planet in the Solar System and closest to the Sun. Mercury can be observed from Earth passing across the surface of the Sun in an event called a 'transit'. This only happens 13 times each century. Look out for the next Mercury 'transit' on 11th November, 2019!
- Jupiter, a gas giant, is the largest planet in the Solar System. The Great Red Spot is a storm that has been raging on Jupiter for 350 years and is so big that at least two Earths could fit inside it!
- Five planets (Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn) can be seen from Earth with the naked eye.
- The rings of Saturn are composed of billions of icy particles, rocky debris and dust.
- The density of Saturn is so low that if you put it in a giant glass of water it would float!
- Uranus was the first planet to be discovered using a telescope in 1781.
- The footprints and tyre tracks left by astronauts on the Moon will remain there forever as there is no wind to blow them away!