

Jupiter, the Giant Planet



Read the passage. Then answer the questions in full sentences.

Name _____ Date _____

Jupiter is the fifth planet from the Sun, so its neighbors are Mars and Saturn. It is the biggest planet in our solar system. It has more than twice as much mass as all the other planets put together.

Jupiter is a gas giant. It is made mostly of hydrogen and helium, and it has no solid surface to stand on. Its very thick air is covered in swirling stripes of clouds.

Jupiter has giant storms. The best known is the Great Red Spot, a storm bigger than Earth that has been raging for more than 300 years. Jupiter has rings too, but they are so faint that they are very hard to see.

A day on Jupiter goes by in just 10 hours. But one year on Jupiter, the time it takes to go around the Sun, is as long as 11.8 Earth years. People have known about Jupiter since ancient times, because it is easy to see with just our eyes.

1. Which two planets are Jupiter's neighbors?

2. What is the Great Red Spot?

3. Why could you not stand on Jupiter?

4. Is a day on Jupiter longer or shorter than a day on Earth? How do you know?

Answer key

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1. Which two planets are Jupiter's neighbors?

Mars and Saturn.

2. What is the Great Red Spot?

A giant storm, bigger than Earth, that has been raging for more than 300 years.

3. Why could you not stand on Jupiter?

Because it is a gas giant, made mostly of hydrogen and helium, with no solid surface.

4. Is a day on Jupiter longer or shorter than a day on Earth? How do you know?

Sample answer: shorter, because a day on Jupiter goes by in 10 hours and a day on Earth lasts 24 hours.