



Planetary Poetry Challenge



Link to full directions from NASA: <https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/edu/teach/activity/planetary-poetry/>

Example poems: https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/edu/pdfs/poetry_examples.pdf

Materials: Research materials (computer - internet access or observation notes of the night sky), paper, pencil

Challenge Directions: Do/Reflect/Apply

“Space has been a source of inspiration for ages. Ancient storytellers looked to the skies, named constellations and created tales to accompany their skyward creations. Playwrights, authors, musicians, photographers and painters have all found inspiration in space and have inspired others with their works about space. Certainly, many NASA scientists and engineers were influenced to pursue their careers by the creative works of others. In turn, their work in the science and engineering fields can inspire future poets, filmmakers and artists.”

1. Research a planet or space topic that is of interest to you. Take notes as you research and write down any questions you may have. These notes will help you write your poem.
 - A great place to start your research: <https://www.nasa.gov/specials/nasaathome/index.html>
 - Or view the night sky and take observation notes on what you see and feel.
2. Determine what type of poem you would like to write. See the example poems link for more information. Here is one type of poem and an example to help get you started.

Acrostic – An acrostic poem is one in which a word is spelled out vertically using a letter for each line. Typically, an acrostic will use the first letter of each line to spell a vertical word (see Jupiter poem example). More advanced acrostics use the last letter of each line or a letter in the middle of the line to spell the vertical word.

Juno explores it
Using her sensors
Pointed carefully
In close up, then out
Threading the doughnut
Encircling the globe:
Radiation belt

- Tracy Drain, JPL systems engineer

3. Think about what you have learned from your research. Use your notes to help you write your poem using the writing process: (1) plan, (2) draft, (3) revise, (4) edit, and (5) publish. With an adult’s permission, share your poem with us! #NASAIowaSpaceGrant or #4hAtHome

Interested in learning more about the poem, *A Brave and Startling Truth*, written by Dr. Maya Angelou that flew on Orion during its December 2014 voyage into space? Visit: <https://www.nasa.gov/content/poem-by-american-matriarch-flown-on-orion-presented-to-nasa-administrator>

Thank you to our partner [Iowa Space Grant Consortium!](#)



This institution is an equal opportunity provider. For the full non-discrimination statement or accommodation inquiries, go to www.extension.iastate.edu/diversity/ext.



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach