

HOW BIG ARE THE PLANETS?

Background

For a stellar salad, if the Sun were a pumpkin about a foot in diameter; Mercury would be a tomato seed about 50 feet away; Venus would be a pea about 75 feet away; Earth would be a pea about 100 feet away; Mars would be a little raisin about 175 feet away; Jupiter would be an apple about 550 feet away; Saturn would be a peach about 1025 feet away; Uranus would be a plum about 2050 feet away; Neptune would be a plum about 3225 feet away; and Pluto would be smaller than a strawberry seed nearly a mile away.

Objective

Upon completion of this activity, students will be able to:

- compare planet size with household fruits and vegetables..
- demonstrate understanding of the size of the solar system

Instructional Time

45 minutes

Materials

Pumpkin (about 1 foot in diameter)

Tomato seed

2 Peas

Raisin

Apple

Peach

2 Plums

Strawberry seed

Procedure

1. Share the background information with the students.
2. Challenge students to find objects of similar size to make their own solar system model.