

Mars Rover Lesson 1 Vocabulary List

Teacher Definitions

Key Vocabulary

astrology: a Babylonian religion that held, in part, that the location of the Sun, Moon and planets at the time of one's birth determines one's fate in life

astronomy: the scientific study of stars, planets, and other matter outside the earth's atmosphere

scale: the ratio or constant of proportion between a copy of an object that is either larger or smaller than the original and the original

ADDITIONAL WORDS

aphelion: the point in a Solar System planet's revolution when it is furthest away from the Sun

apoastron: the point in an extra-Solar planet's revolution when it is furthest away from its star

astronomical unit: the length of the semi-major axis of the Earth's orbit . 1 AU = 149,597,870.700 kilometers, 92,955,807.273 mi, or 8.3167463967 light minutes

eccentricity: a way to measure how round or oval a planet's orbit is. A circle has an eccentricity of zero, $e = 0$, and a straight line has an eccentricity of one, $e = 1$.

ecliptic plane: the plane of the Earth's orbit

ecliptic pole: the apparent location among the distant stars pointed to by a line perpendicular to the ecliptic plane through the center of the Earth's orbit.

ellipse: the oval-like shape of an orbit. Formally, an ellipse is a locus of points the sum of whose distances from two points (the foci) remains constant. The ellipse is one of the four types of conic section.

focus: the location of a star within a planet's orbit. One of the two points that define the ellipse of an orbit.

light minute: the distance light travels in one minute. One light-minute = 17,987,547.48 kilometers

orbit: the oval path that an object takes in space around a star or planet. Moons have orbits around a planet; planets have orbits around a star.

periastron: the point in an extra-Solar planet's revolution when it is closest to its star

perihelion: the point in a Solar System planet's revolution when it is closest to the Sun

planet: an object that orbits a star that is round in shape owing to its own gravity

revolution: the movement of a planet around a star

rotation: the way a planet spins around, like a basketball on top of a finger