

PLANET IN A JAR: YOUR OWN WORLD!



Dear Families,

Today, your child learned about the building blocks of life and how living things adapt to their environments, inspired by the book "We Go Way Back." Now, they can create their very own world at home with a "Planet in a Jar" activity!

MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clear jar or plastic container (a clean pickle jar, mason jar, or plastic bottle works great!) • Soil or potting mix • Small plants (like succulents, air plants, or even sprouted seeds) • Small rocks or pebbles • Water • Optional: Small toy animals, play-dough to create extraterrestrial creatures, or other decorative items
ACTIVITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build Your Planet's Base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start by adding a layer of rocks or pebbles to the bottom of the jar. This will help with drainage. • Add a layer of soil or potting mix on top of the rocks. 2. Add Your Planet's Life: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carefully plant your small plants in the soil. • Add a little bit of water to moisten the soil, but don't overwater. 3. Create Your Ecosystem: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imagine what kind of environment your planet has. Is it hot, cold, wet, or dry? • Add more rocks, pebbles, or other materials to create the landscape. • If you have small toy animals, add them to your planet. Or, use play-dough to create your own unique extraterrestrial creatures! 4. Observe and Learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place your jar in a sunny spot. • Observe how the plants grow and how the environment changes over time. • Discuss with your child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ What do the plants need to survive in their jar planet? ◦ How is your jar planet similar to or different from Earth ◦ What kind of extraterrestrial creatures would live on your planet, and why?

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CONNECTING TO ASTROBIOLOGY

- This activity helps your child understand the concept of ecosystems and how living things interact with their environment.
- It encourages them to think about the different factors that affect life on a planet, such as water, sunlight, and soil.
- By creating their own world, they're exploring the possibilities of life beyond Earth and using their imaginations to think like astrobiologists!

IMPORTANT NOTES

- Supervise your child during this activity, especially when using glass jars.
- Choose plants that are easy to care for and suitable for a jar environment.
- Don't overwater your jar planet, as this can lead to mold growth.
- Have fun and be creative!

