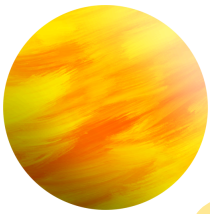
Name:_____ Date:_____



Mercury
Reading Comprehension



Read the text and answer the questions.

Mercury is a planet. It's the planet nearest the Sun. Mercury is very hot. The temperature is between 100 degrees and -200 degrees Celsius. There is no water on Mercury. There aren't any plants or animals, but there are mountains and valleys. Some of the mountains are very high. One mountain is nearly 5,000 meters tall. That's about the same as some mountains on Earth. The valleys are long and deep. Mercury is small. It's only a little bigger than Earth's moon. In the past, some people thought that Mercury was two planets because it sometimes looks like there are two parts. Mercury goes around the sun quickly. A year on Mercury is only eighty-eight days. A day on Mercury is very long. It's almost fifty-nine Earth days long. That means that one day on Mercury is about two weeks on Earth! Only two space missions have gone to Mercury. One was the Mariner 10 in 1974/75. It took pictures of about half of Mercury. The other mission is the MESSENGER mission. It started in 2004, and it went into orbit around Mercury in 2011. MESSENGER will take pictures and collect information for one year.

1. How long is a year on Mercury compared to Earth?

_____

2. How many space missions have gone to Mercury?

_____

3. What are the temperatures on Mercury like?

_____

4. How does the size of Mercury compare to Earth's moon?

_____

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