

GLOSSARY

- Asteroid** A rock in space that is orbiting the sun. Most are found in the Asteroid or Main Belt.
- Astronaut** Someone who travels into space.
- Astronomer** Someone who studies the universe and everything in it.
- Astronomy** The study of space.
- Astrophotographer** Someone who takes photographs of the night sky and objects in it.
- Astrophysics** The physics of the universe.
- Atmosphere** Gases round a moon or planet and held in place by gravity.
- Atom** The basic building blocks of everything in the universe.
- Billion** One thousand million.
- Black hole** A collapsed star that has so much gravity that everything close to it, even light, is pulled in.
- Cluster** Stars or a group of galaxies.
- Comet** A small object made of dust and ice. Sometimes known as a 'dirty snowball'.
- Constellation** An area of sky where bright stars seem to form together in the shape of an animal or human.
- Crater** A hollow on the surface of a planet, moon or asteroid formed by an asteroid colliding into it.
- Element** Hydrogen, oxygen and carbon. A substance made up of one kind of atom.
- Equator** An imaginary line drawn round the middle of a planet, moon or star. It divides it into the northern and southern hemispheres.
- Fireball** A very bright meteor.
- Galaxy** A large collection of stars, gas and dust held together by gravity.
- Gravity** A force of attraction.
- Light year** A unit used to measure distances across the universe. The distance light travels in one year.
- Magnetic field** Space round a star or planet where the magnetism of the star or planet is felt.
- Mass** The amount of material in an object. The more mass the heavier an object is.
- Meteor** The streak of light produced by a meteor as it travels through the Earth's atmosphere.
- Meteorite** A space rock that crashes into Earth, the Moon or another planet.
- Meteoroid** A very small piece of dust from a comet or asteroid.
- Milky Way** The part of our galaxy we can see at night.
- Moon** A small planet that orbits another planet rather than the sun.
- Nebula** A cloud of dust and gas in space.
- Nuclear reaction** The process when elements change to other elements inside a star.
- Observatory** The name for buildings that house telescopes.
- Orbit** The path taken by one object round another larger object.
- Planet** A large, round object made of rock and/or gas that orbits round a star.
- Protostar** A star in the process of forming.
- Satellite** An object held in orbit round a planet or moon. Human-made satellites orbit Earth. The Moon is the Earth's largest satellite.
- Solar system** The Sun and all the objects that orbit it.
- Star** Like our own sun, a huge flaming sphere of gases.
- Sunspot** A cooler spot on the surface of the Sun.
- Supercluster** Cluster of galaxies at the end of its life.
- Supernova** An immense star that explodes and shines brightly for a few days.
- Telescope** A piece of equipment that through the use of lens and/or mirrors collects light from a distant object and forms that light into an image.
- Trillion** One million million (1,000,000,000,000).
- Universe** Everything that exists.



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