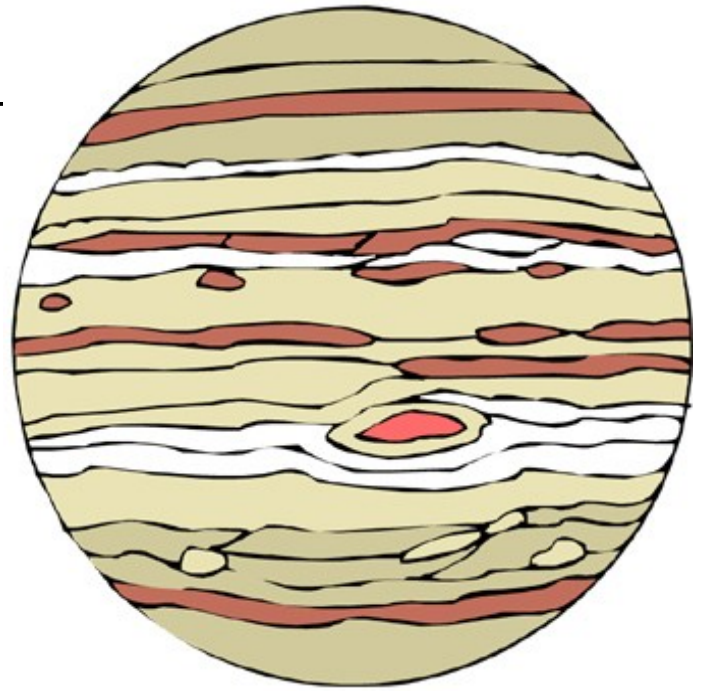


Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Jupiter

by Cynthia Sherwood



If Jupiter were a person, it might run around chanting "I'm number one! I'm number one!" That's because Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system and the one that spins the fastest. It also has the most moons of any planet and the largest

moon. Jupiter also has the strongest gravity of all the planets. Ancient astronomers knew what they were doing when they named Jupiter after the Roman king of the gods.

It would take about a thousand Earths to fill up Jupiter. But for a gigantic planet, Jupiter moves very fast. It rotates on its axis about every ten hours, compared to Earth which takes 24 hours. Jupiter takes about 12 years to orbit the sun.

Jupiter isn't first in everything. It's the fifth planet from the sun and it's only the third brightest object in the night sky, behind the moon and Venus.

Jupiter is one of the gas giants. Its surface is made of thick red, brown, yellow, and white clouds. One huge area of that surface is called the "Great Red Spot." That's where a storm three times bigger than Earth has raged for more than 300 years! Imagine winds stronger than a hurricane lasting for centuries.

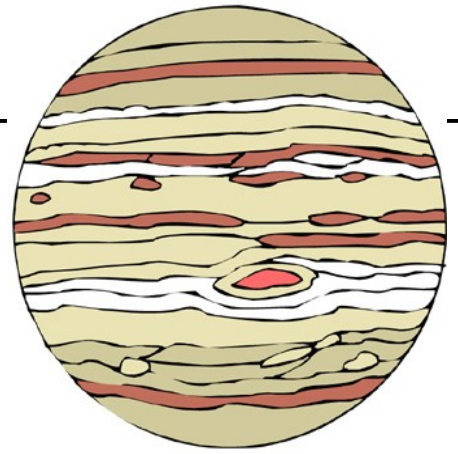
Jupiter has at least 63 moons. Most are fairly small, but four are quite large. They were first discovered by the astronomer Galileo in the year 1610 using one of the earliest telescopes. The largest of Jupiter's moons is named Ganymede. It's even bigger than the planet Mercury!

Six space probes have traveled to Jupiter, so scientists have a lot of information about the planet. You can do your own study of Jupiter just by staring at the night sky. If you see a really bright star that's high in the sky, you're probably seeing Jupiter, the number one planet.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Jupiter

by Cynthia Sherwood



1. Tell whether each statement is true or false.

\_\_\_\_\_ Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system.

\_\_\_\_\_ Jupiter spins faster than any other planet.

\_\_\_\_\_ Jupiter is the closest planet to the sun.

\_\_\_\_\_ Jupiter has the most rings of any planet.

\_\_\_\_\_ Jupiter is the brightest object in our night sky.

2. What is the "Great Red Spot"?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. How long does it take Jupiter to travel around the sun?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. How long does it take Jupiter to rotate around on its axis?

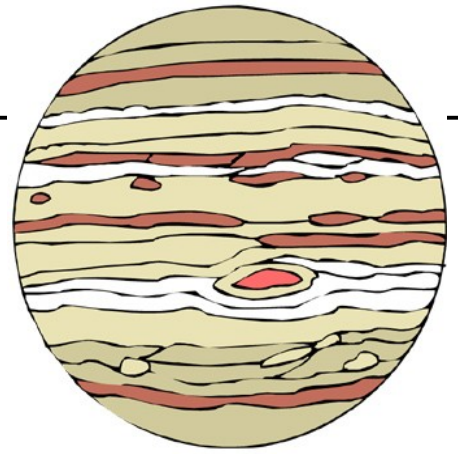
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**Challenge:** How many years ago did Galileo discover Jupiter's moons? Use your Math skills!

## ANSWER KEY

# Jupiter

by Cynthia Sherwood



1. Tell whether each statement is true or false.

**true** Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system.

**true** Jupiter spins faster than any other planet.

**false** Jupiter is the closest planet to the sun.

**false** Jupiter has the most rings of any planet.

**false** Jupiter is the brightest object in our night sky.

2. What is the "Great Red Spot"?

**An ancient wind storm that is three times bigger than Earth.**

3. How long does it take Jupiter to travel around the sun?

**twelve years**

4. How long does it take Jupiter to rotate around on its axis?

**ten hours**

Challenge: How many years ago did Galileo discover Jupiter's moons? Use your Math skills!

**Subtract 1610 from the current year to find the answer.**