Unit 7
Vocabulary Cards

Skills Strand
GRADE 3

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planet
planet—a round object in space that orbits a star (planets)
orbit
**orbit**—the curved path something in space takes around another object in space; Planets move in an orbit around the sun. (orbiting)
solar system
solar system—the sun, other bodies like asteroids and meteors, and the planets that orbit the sun
**rotate**—turn about an axis or a center
*(rotating, rotates, rotation)*
axis
axis—an imaginary straight line through the middle of an object, around which that object spins
tilted
tilted—slanted or tipped to one side
eclipse
eclipse—the blocking of the light from the sun by another heavenly body (eclipses)
naked eye
naked eye—your eye
probe
probe—a tool used to explore something, such as outer space (probes)
gas giant
gas giant—one of the large outer planets, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune, that is composed of mainly hydrogen gas (gas giants)

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hydrogen
hydrogen—the most common gas in the universe, which is lighter than air and easily catches fire
asteroid
asteroid—a space rock, smaller than a planet, that orbits the sun (asteroids)
comet
comet—a frozen ball of dust and ice that travels through outer space (comets)
meteor
meteor—a piece of rock that burns very brightly when it enters Earth’s atmosphere from space, also called a shooting star meteors
asteroid belt
asteroid belt—an area between Mars and Jupiter where thousands of asteroids orbit around the sun in a shape like a belt
Halley’s Comet
Halley’s Comet—a famous comet named for British scientist Edmund Halley that is visible from Earth with the naked eye every 76 years
meteoroid
meteoroid—a space rock, smaller than an asteroid, that orbits the sun (meteoroids)
atmosphere
atmosphere—an invisible, protective blanket of air around Earth and other heavenly bodies
meteorite
*meteorite*—a meteor that does not fully burn up in Earth’s atmosphere and falls to Earth
galaxy
galaxy—a very large cluster of billions of stars, dust, and gas held together by gravity and separated from other star systems by a large amount of space (galaxies)
astronomer
astronomer—a scientist who studies stars, planets, and outer space (astronomers)
billion
billion—a very large number (billions)
Milky Way Galaxy
Milky Way Galaxy—the galaxy that contains Earth and the solar system in which it lies
Andromeda Galaxy
Andromeda Galaxy—the spiral galaxy that is closest to the Milky Way galaxy
constellation
constellation—stars that form a pattern or shape that looks like such things as a person, an object, or an animal as seen from Earth (constellations)
Ursa Major
Ursa Major—the constellation named by Ptolemy that is also called Big Bear; It includes the Big Dipper.
imagine
imagine—to pretend
Ursa Minor
Ursa Minor—the constellation made of seven stars named by Ptolemy that is also called Little Bear; It is the Little Dipper.
Polaris
Polaris—the North Star; the brightest star at the end of the handle of the Ursa Minor/Little Dipper that stays in the same place in the night sky all year long.
observatory
observatory—a place used to observe the sun, moon, stars, and outer space (observatories)
launch
launch—to send a rocket into outer space (launched)
Hubble Telescope
Hubble Telescope—a large telescope that collects information in space; It was carried into space in 1990 and will be there until 2014.
NASA—National Aeronautics and Space Administration; an organization in the United States that directs space travel and research
astronaut
astronaut—a person who travels into outer space
manned
manned—carrying and operated by people
Apollo 11
Apollo 11—a rocket ship that took three American astronauts to the moon in 1969
gravity
gravity—a force that pulls things toward one another
attraction
attraction—when things are drawn to move closer together
space shuttle
space shuttle—a manned spacecraft used for exploration
exploration
exploration—the study of unknown places or things
reusable
reusable—when something can be used more than once
shuttle
shuttle—to go back and forth from one place to the next (shuttled)
booster rocket
booster rocket—one of two parts of a space shuttle that helps launch it into space by overcoming gravity (booster rockets)
research
research—the kind of equipment used to collect information through experiments
especially
especially—very much, particularly
space station
space station—a manned satellite that is made to be in outer space for a long period of time
unmanned
unmanned—not carrying people
satellite
**satellite**—a natural or man-made object that orbits a planet or smaller object (satellites)
international
international—involving more than one country
chemical engineering
chemical engineering—a field of study in which scientists use their knowledge of chemistry and how things in the natural world are made and interact
African-American studies
African-American studies—the study of the history, culture, and politics of African-Americans, Americans who have ancestors from Africa
Peace Corps
Peace Corps—a group of American volunteers who carry out projects in other countries to help improve the lives of people living there
volunteer
volunteer—a person who willingly performs a service without getting paid
health care
health care—the prevention or treatment of illnesses by trained medical specialists
weightlessness
weightlessness—to have little or no weight
Endeavour
Endeavour—a NASA space shuttle
courage
courage — bravery
theory
theory—a suggested explanation for why something happens (theories)
Big Bang Theory
Big Bang Theory—a scientific explanation of how the universe began
astrophysicist
astrophysicist—a scientist who studies the physical characteristics of heavenly bodies (astrophysicists)
matter
matter—the stuff everything in the universe is made of; anything that takes up space
sphere
sphere—an object shaped like a ball (spheres)