

# PLANETS Science Series

## Space Hazards

Planetary Science for Out-of-School Time



# PLANETS



PLANETS (Planetary Learning that Advances the Nexus of Engineering, Technology, and Science) is a partnership for the development and dissemination of NASA out-of-school time curricular and educator resource modules that integrate planetary science, technology, and engineering, particularly with underrepresented audiences.



This material is based upon work supported by NASA under cooperative agreement award number NNX16AC53A. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).



Center for Science Teaching and Learning



## NAU Collaborators:

Haylee Archer Graduate student  
Nadine Barlow Professor, Department of Physics and Astronomy  
Courtney Barnes Graduate student  
Christopher Benson Graduate student  
Nena Bloom Evaluation Coordinator and Researcher  
Joëlle Clark Principal Investigator  
Vanessa Fitz-Kesler Professional Development Associate  
Maegan Foltz Undergraduate student  
Dane Henderson Graduate student  
Anne Hamlin Professional Development Coordinator  
Kenric Kesler Professional Development Coordinator  
Lori Pigue Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Physics and Astronomy  
Jayna Powers Graduate student, Department of Physics and Astronomy  
Elisabeth Roberts Evaluation Coordinator and Researcher  
Lori Rubino-Hare Professional Development Coordinator  
Sean Ryan Professional Development Coordinator  
Brandon VanBibber Undergraduate student

# PLANETS

## **USGS Collaborators:**

Ryan Anderson Research Scientist  
Lauren Edgar Research Scientist  
Tenielle Gaither Research Scientist  
Moses Milazzo Research Scientist now with Other Orb LLC  
M. Elise Rumph Research Scientist  
Greg Vaughan Research Scientist

## **Museum of Science - Boston Collaborators:**

Christine Cunningham now with Penn State University  
Martha Davis Director of Curriculum Development  
Christine Gentry Research & Evaluation Analyst  
Mary Eileen McDonnell Curriculum Developer  
Natacha Meyer Curriculum Development, Manager  
Bekka Nolan Curriculum Developer  
Christopher San Antonio-Tunis Research & Evaluation Manager  
Kate Sokol Senior Curriculum Developer

## **PLANETS Evaluation:**

Carol Haden Magnolia Consulting

## **Other Collaborators:**

Mindy Bell Flagstaff STEM City  
Mansel Nelson Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals  
Courtney Sullivan Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence

# Space Hazards

Planetary Science for Out-of-School Time

EDUCATOR *GUIDE*

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE*

## **Table of Contents**

<i>About the PLANETS Science Series</i>	9
<i>Learning Objectives</i>	10
<i>Connections to Standards</i>	10
<i>Unit Overview</i>	15
<i>Educator Background</i>	18
<i>Vocabulary</i>	29
<i>Unit Materials List</i>	33
<b>Activity 1:</b> <i>Everyday Hazards</i>	35
<b>Activity 2:</b> <i>Hazards on Earth</i>	41
<b>Activity 3:</b> <i>Hazards in Space</i>	49
<b>Activity 4:</b> <i>Mitigate Hazards for Your Mission</i>	55

# EDUCATOR GUIDE

## About the PLANETS Science Series: Space Hazards

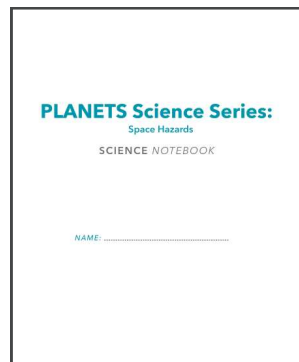
The PLANETS Science Series supports youth exploration in the field of planetary science by exploring the different hazards associated with the Earth and other planetary bodies as well as strategies to mitigate these hazards for exploration. This unit can be done independently, but is designed to complement the PLANETS Engineering is Elementary “In Good Hands: Engineering Space Gloves” activities, available at the link below:

<https://planets-stem.org/space-hazards/>

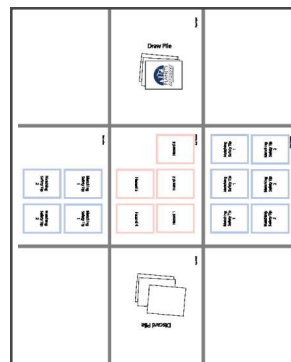
This PLANETS Science Series unit has several parts. All of the available materials can be downloaded for free from the PLANETS website.



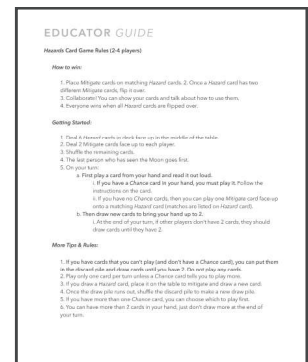
Hazards Cards  
(Decks A, B, C, & D)



Science Notebook



Playmats (Safety & Mitigate Hazards)



Hazards Card Game Rules

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE*

## Learning Objectives

In the PLANETS Science Series: Space Hazards, youth will be challenged to answer the following guiding question: *What hazards are there in space exploration and how do we mitigate them?*

- » Youth will learn about hazards on Earth and the idea that humans have developed ways to mitigate some of them.
- » Youth will explore the concept that there are many hazards in space. Some hazards are the same as for the Earth, Moon, or Mars, and others are different.
- » Youth will learn that if people want to explore space, they need to mitigate hazards, and that there are multiple ways to mitigate many hazards.
- » Youth will apply their learning by selecting one of several different types of missions (i.e., humans versus robotic) for which they must mitigate different types of hazards.

## Connections to Standards

The activities included in this unit support the teaching of multiple standards, including:

### Next Generation Science Standards

**3-ESS3-1** Make a claim about the merit of a design solution that reduces the impacts of a weather-related hazard.

**4-ESS3-2** Generate and compare multiple solutions to reduce the impacts of natural Earth processes on humans.

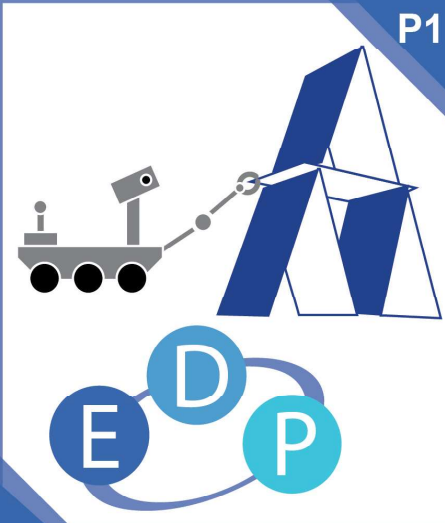
**5-ESS3-1** Obtain and combine information about ways individual communities use science ideas to protect the Earth's resources and environment.



# Learning Progression - Prep Activities

These adventures introduce youth to engineering, an engineering design process (EDP), and the curricula's definition of technology.

**P1**



**What is Engineering?**  
Create a Tower

**Purpose**

Youth engage in an engineering design challenge using an Engineering Design Process (EDP).

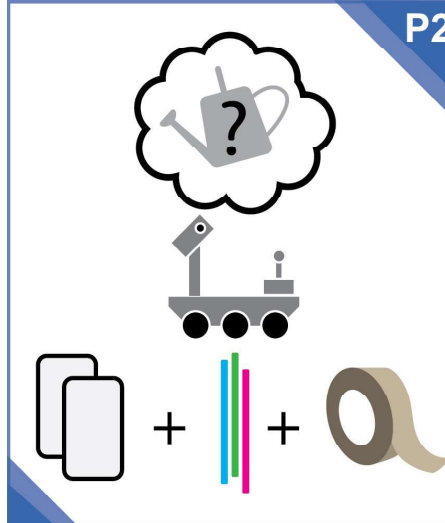
**Key Take Away**

We are engineers.

**Engineering Reflection**

Today we used an EDP to solve a problem.

**P2**



**What is Technology?**  
Create a Technology

**Purpose**

Youth consider the definition of technology as any thing or process that humans (engineers) design to solve a problem.

**Key Take Away**

Anything designed by humans to solve problems is a technology.

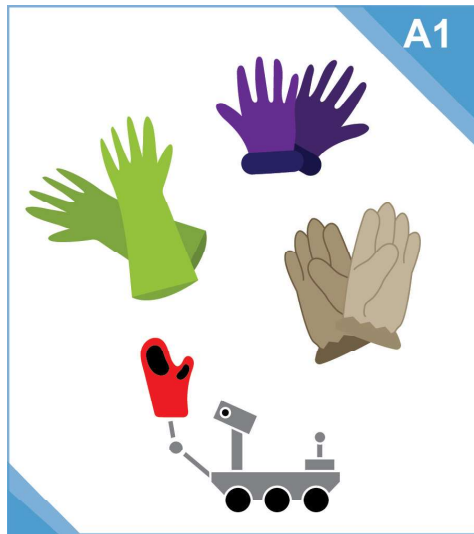
**Engineering Reflection**

Today we asked how we can design technologies to solve everyday problems.



# Learning Progression - Engineering

In these adventures, youth investigate various glove materials. They find that different materials are good for different uses and protect against different hazards.



A1

## Everyday Gloves Test Gloves for Different Uses

### Purpose

Youth investigate multiple glove types to determine which are better for certain tasks.

### Key Take Away

We can identify which gloves are best for which uses.

### Engineering Reflection

Today we asked which common household gloves are best for certain tasks. We tested them and compared the results to answer our question.



A2

## Chilling Out Test Materials for Cold

### Purpose

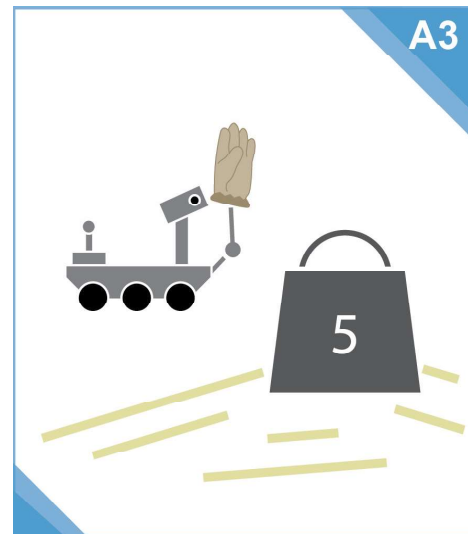
Youth explore how well different materials insulate against cold.

### Key Take Away

We can identify materials to use in making a glove that protects against cold.

### Engineering Reflection

Today we asked which materials are better at insulating against the cold. We tested and compared the results to answer our question.



A3

## Ready for Impact Test Materials for Impact

### Purpose

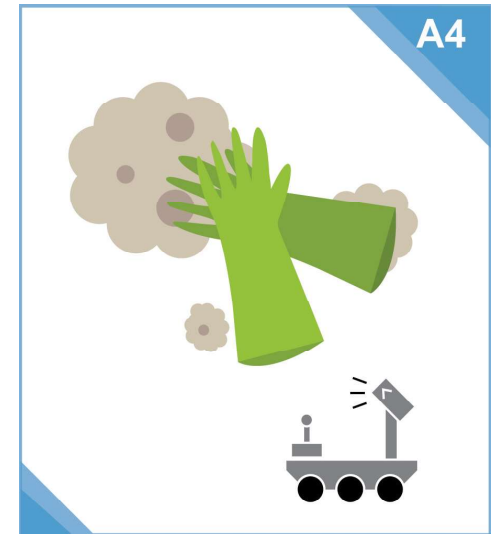
Youth explore how well different materials protect against impact.

### Key Take Away

We can identify materials to use in making a glove that protects against impact.

### Engineering Reflection

Today we asked which materials are better at protecting against impact. We tested and compared the results to answer our question.



A4

## Dangerous Dust Test Materials for Dust

### Purpose

Youth explore how different materials resist or collect dust.

### Key Take Away

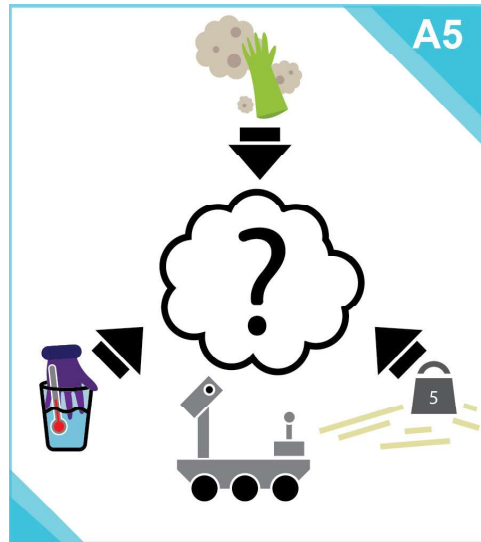
We can identify materials to use in making a glove that doesn't pick up as much dangerous dust.

### Engineering Reflection

Today we asked which materials are better at not picking up dangerous dust. We tested and compared the results to answer our question.

# Learning Progression - Engineering

In these adventures, youth apply what they learned in adventures 1-4 to design, improve, and share their space glove. Each is made to protect against hazards for a specific space environment.



A5

## Create a Space Glove Plan, Create, Test

### Purpose

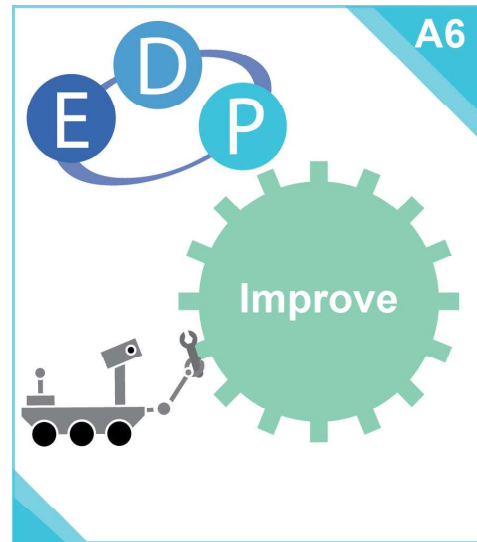
Youth apply what they learned in prior adventures to plan, create, and test a space glove designed for a space mission and its associated hazards.

### Key Take Away

We can engineer a glove that protects us from certain space hazards and can be used to perform mission tasks.

### Engineering Reflection

Today we used data from prior investigations to imagine, create and test a space glove for use in a space environment.



A6

## Improve a Space Glove Improve a Technology

### Purpose

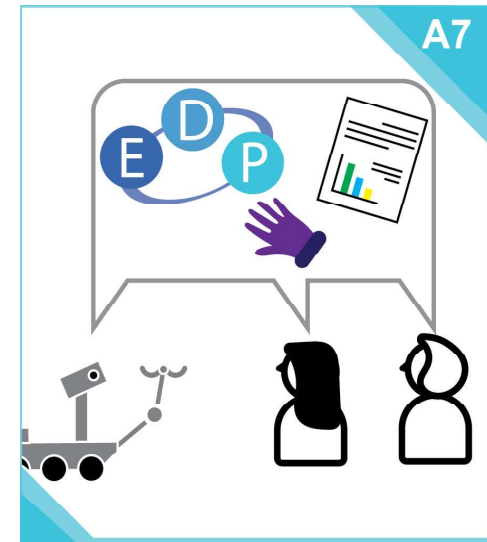
Youth improve their glove for more agility, strength, or to better protect against the hazards of their space environment.

### Key Take Away

We can improve technologies we have designed.

### Engineering Reflection

Today we improved our space glove. Mistakes help engineers learn and then improve technology.



A7

## Engineering Showcase Communicate Results

### Purpose

Youth prepare presentations to communicate their space glove design to others.

### Key Take Away

We can communicate how we designed our space glove using an EDP.

### Engineering Reflection

Today we communicated our space glove technology and how we used an EDP to design it.



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE*

## Unit Overview

In this unit, youth will learn:

- » Youth will learn about hazards on Earth and the idea that humans have developed ways to mitigate some of them.
- » Youth will explore the concept that there are many hazards in space. Some hazards are the same as for the Earth, Moon, or Mars, and others are different.
- » Youth will learn that if people want to explore space, they need to mitigate hazards, and that there are multiple ways to mitigate many hazards.
- » Youth will apply their learning by selecting one of several different types of missions (i.e., humans versus robotic) for which they must mitigate different types of hazards.

In these activities, youth will learn about hazards on Earth and in space and different strategies humans have developed to mitigate them. This builds on the concepts of engineering space gloves to account for different hazards in different planetary environments in the Engineering Adventures unit, *In Good Hands: Engineering Space Gloves*. Youth will also explore chance factors that either help (research and collaboration) or complicate (loss of power or communication) hazard mitigation. In the final activity, youth will put together all they have learned to make a presentation as Health and Safety Officers for an upcoming NASA mission.

In Activity 1, “Everyday Hazards,” youth learn about the concept of hazards and the idea that humans have developed ways to mitigate them. Youth act out hazards and safety tips in a form of charades and match appropriate safety tips with their respective hazards in a collaborative card game. Youth also learn the definition of the word “mitigate” and are introduced to the idea that there are careers focused on hazard mitigation.

### **Activity 1 Guiding Questions**

- » What are some examples of everyday hazards?
- » What are some safety tips that help address these hazards?
- » What does the word “mitigate” mean?
- » What does a Health and Safety Officer do?

For example, safety hazards like tripping and crossing the street can be mitigated by

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | *Unit Overview*

watching where you are going. Food allergies and cold or flu germs can be mitigated by medicine and washing your hands.

In Activity 2, “Earth Hazards” youth explore hazards on Earth and the idea that humans have developed ways to mitigate some of them. Youth match appropriate mitigation strategies with their hazards in a collaborative card game. Youth also learn in the card game that chance events and human collaboration also play a role in hazard mitigation.

## **Activity 2 Guiding Questions**

- » What are some examples of natural hazards?
- » What are some things people could do to mitigate hazards?

For example, Earth hazards like volcano, flood, wildfire, and extreme weather can be mitigated by a variety of things like evacuating (getting out of there) whereas something like drought can only be mitigated by preparing ahead of time. Collaboration via teamwork, friendly neighbors, and research can help mitigate hazards. Things like climate change and being unprepared make it more difficult to mitigate hazards.

In Activity 3, “Space Hazards” youth explore that hazards also exist in space and that some are the same as they are on Earth and some are different. Youth also learn about hazards that are the same or different between the Moon, Mars, and asteroids. Humans have also developed ways to mitigate some space hazards. Youth match mitigation strategies with hazards in the same collaborative card game as activity 1, but with different cards.

## **Activity 3 Guiding Questions**

- » What are some of the hazards that NASA missions must mitigate in space in order to explore?
- » What are some things NASA has done or people could do to mitigate these hazards?
- » Do you think different places in space have different hazards?

For example, space hazards like micro impacts and radiation can be mitigated by things like shielding. Growing plants can help with the hazards of not having enough air (oxygen) or food. Having no air, poison (toxic) soil and scratchy soil (regolith) can all be mitigated with a space suit. Collaboration via teamwork, re-supply, and research can help mitigate hazards.



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | *Unit Overview*

Things like the loss of communication or power make it more difficult to mitigate hazards.

In Activity 4, groups combine the information they have learned in the previous activities and present what hazards, mitigation strategies, and other factors NASA needs to consider and employ for one of four mission options. The missions youth are considering are both human and robotic. They launch on Earth, and visit the Moon, Mars, or asteroids.

## **Activity 4 Guiding Questions**

- » Which hazards do you think are the most / least likely for your particular mission?
- » Which do you think are the most and least dangerous?
- » Which mitigations do you think are the easiest, most cost effective, or apply to the most hazards?

A launch in Florida would have to take hazards like extreme weather and flooding into account, and mitigate these by doing things like preparing supplies; whereas, astronauts visiting the Moon would have to deal with hazards like scratchy soil (regolith), low gravity, and no food, water, or air, and apply the appropriate mitigations like space suits, vitamins, food, and exercise. Both of these missions have to address extreme temperatures (too hot / too cold) and mitigate this with things like insulation (layer up / thicker walls).

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE*

## Educator Background

### Space Hazards

Reference to concepts on the hazard cards are highlighted in blue text and bolded to make information for subsequent activities easier to find. Also check out the vocabulary section on page 29.

### Hazards on Earth

#### *Lava flows, ash and gases, and other volcanic hazards*

Some of the primary hazards from volcanoes are lava flows, ash, and toxic gases. Ground movement from volcanoes can also trigger landslides, which could dam rivers and cause flooding.

**Lava flows** occur when molten rock erupts to the surface and flows like a river of hot liquid rock. Lava flows can range from small and gentle to large and fast-moving. Lava flows burn, knock down, and bury anything in their way. There is little that can be done to stop them because they are so hot and dense: the best thing is to just get out of the way.

Volcanic ash occurs in explosive volcanic eruptions. It is not the same as the ash from a fire, which is made of burned wood or leaves. **Volcanic ash** is made of tiny shards of rock and glass, which makes it extremely dangerous to breathe or get in your eyes. Large eruptions can send huge amounts of ash into the air, which then rains down on the surrounding area or is carried downwind. Not only is the ash dangerous to people and animals, it is very heavy when it builds up, and like a very large snowfall can block roads and crush buildings. Ash can also kill crops and other plants if enough falls on them. Ash in the atmosphere can damage airplane engines and disrupt air travel.

Most volcanic eruptions also involve toxic gases, including gases like carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, hydrogen sulfide, and several types of acid. Carbon dioxide is heavier than air, so it can collect in low places and suffocate humans or animals. Hydrogen sulfide, which can smell like rotten eggs, is very toxic if there's a lot of it. Sulfur dioxide is also toxic to breathe and can also interact with water in the atmosphere or a lake to form sulfuric acid. Acid can



# EDUCATOR GUIDE | Educator Background

come directly out of a volcano or it can mix with water in clouds and become acid rain or fog. This acid can mix with lake or pond water and turn the water acidic for fish and other animals in the water. Scientists who work near active volcanoes usually have to wear protective masks with filters to remove toxic gases from the air they breathe.

<https://volcanoes.usgs.gov/vhp/gas.html>

## ***Temperature changes with and without an atmosphere (Too hot/ too cold)***

Heat is transferred by three main processes: conduction, radiation, and convection. Conduction is when something hot is in physical contact with something cold, and the heat flows to the cold object to equalize their temperatures. Radiation is when something hot loses energy by emitting radiation, or light. Convection occurs when air near a hot object heats up, becomes less dense than its surroundings and flows away, taking the heat with it. Convection needs air or liquid to transfer heat, so in space where there is no air, convection cannot occur. Even when there is air, such as inside a space station, convection is caused by hot air rising. If everything is weightless, hot air cannot rise.

Without convection, anything that sits out in the sunlight in space gets extremely hot because there is no air to carry the heat away, and radiation and conduction can't keep up. Likewise, it means that anything that is in the shade in space gets extremely cold: radiation and conduction slowly remove all of the heat, and there is no air to deliver more heat. Since conduction is so ineffective at transferring heat it is possible for the same object (such as a moon rock, a spacecraft, or an astronaut's space suit) to get extremely hot on the sunlit side and extremely cold on the shadowed side. For example, the international space station would be about 250 degrees F (121 C) on its sunlit side and -250 degrees F (-157 C) in the shade without careful thermal design to keep its internal temperature safe.

[https://science.nasa.gov/science-news/science-at-nasa/2001/ast21mar\\_1/](https://science.nasa.gov/science-news/science-at-nasa/2001/ast21mar_1/)

## ***Climate Change***

**Climate change** is the change in the Earth's long-term (decades to centuries) global temperature and climate patterns. A rapid increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere



# EDUCATOR GUIDE | Educator Background

is currently causing the planet to warm up by trapping more of the Sun's heat. The Earth's climate system is very complex and deeply interconnected, so even a small change in temperature can have a wide range of effects on different parts of the world. Increased temperatures (**too hot**) are causing the polar ice caps and many glaciers to melt, which leads to rising sea levels and changes in ocean currents. Warmer ocean temperatures feed more frequent and more powerful hurricanes and **extreme weather**. Warmer oceans also are devastating to sea life. For example, some studies estimate that more than 90% of coral reefs will be dead by 2050, even if humans stop producing carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) today. Other parts of the world are experiencing severe **droughts**, which lead to crop shortages, **wildfires**, and **dust storms**. Others are experience more incidences of **flooding**. Increased temperatures at the poles may also destabilize atmospheric currents, causing more severe winters and winter storms (**too cold**) in the mid-latitudes and warmer temperatures at the poles. While climate change may impact weather events, weather and climate are not the same thing. Weather is the state of the atmosphere at a certain time and place with respect to its temperature, humidity, cloud cover, wind, or precipitation. As an analogy, weather is like the clothes you are wearing right now; climate is like all the clothes you have in your closet.

## *Hazards related to Extreme Weather*

**Extreme weather** refers to strong storms such as hurricanes and blizzards, and dangerous weather phenomena such as tornadoes and lightning. These hazards are all driven by the interactions between the Earth's atmosphere and heat from the Sun. As more heat gets trapped in Earth's atmosphere, weather becomes more extreme - storms produce more rain, stronger winds, and more lightning. Stronger storms also produce more tornados when conditions are right. Hurricanes increase in strength due to surface water temperature increases: the heat energy from the water increases the energy of the storm and increases the evaporation, putting more moisture into the atmosphere. Warmer, moister air creates bigger, stronger hurricanes.

## *Hazards related to Geology*

Geologic hazards include **volcanoes**, **earthquakes**, landslides, and tsunami. These hazards are driven by the Earth's internal energy, rather than the Sun's energy. Because they occur in response to processes inside the Earth, they are harder to predict than hazards that occur in



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | *Educator Background*

the Earth's atmosphere. Some geologic hazards like volcanoes, landslides and earthquake aftershocks have a probability of occurrence that can be calculated based on historical conditions. Volcanoes generate certain types of earthquakes before eruption and some swell up due to pressure building inside. Scientists are studying Marsquakes and Moonquakes to try to understand ground shaking on other planetary bodies, and what those can tell us about their interiors.

## **Hazards in Space**

### ***Space Radiation***

**Radiation** is energy in the form of light waves or particles. Many types of radiation are harmless, but high energy radiation, called "ionizing" radiation, is dangerous because it has enough energy to break chemical bonds in animal cells. This is dangerous for two reasons: if a lot of cells are damaged all at once, it can cause radiation sickness, which begins with vomiting, followed by more severe symptoms or even death depending on how much radiation damage occurred. Ionizing radiation damage can lead to cancer later in life as the cell malfunctions when it tries to divide and replicate.

In space, astronauts are at risk from two main types of radiation: galactic cosmic rays and solar flare particles. Galactic cosmic rays are the nuclei of heavy atoms moving at nearly the speed of light. They are produced by distant, extremely high energy processes like supernovae or black holes. When a cosmic ray hits something, like an astronaut or a spacecraft, it breaks apart and forms a shower of high-energy particles and leaves a path of ionized atoms in its path. Cosmic rays can easily penetrate through spacecraft or space suits, but can be stopped by shielding such as lead, concrete, or soil on a planetary surface, or by thick enough layers of specific types of plastic or tanks of water on spacecraft.

The sun is constantly producing radiation, both the kind that is essential for life on Earth (light and heat), and higher energy radiation in the form of x-rays and particles. The particles emitted by the sun are mostly protons, electrons, and helium nuclei, and are sometimes referred to as the "solar wind". Solar flares are explosions on the surface of the sun that release a burst of x-rays and high-energy particles. X-rays travel at the speed of light and can reach astronauts in minutes, but the particles are slower and can take several days to reach

# EDUCATOR GUIDE | *Educator Background*

astronauts, giving enough time to seek shelter. These particles are easier to stop than cosmic rays but can still be harmful to astronauts who are not adequately shielded.

<https://www.nasa.gov/analog/nsrl/why-space-radiation-matters>

## *Weightlessness (Low gravity)*

It is a misconception that there is no gravity in space: The force of Earth's gravity at the altitude of the space station is only slightly lower than the gravity that we feel at the surface. The difference is that the space station is essentially in free-fall around the Earth, so that the force of gravity (weight) cannot be felt. On planets or other bodies that are smaller than the Earth, gravity is actually weaker, so even on the surface an astronaut will feel lighter. The moon has about 1/6th the gravity of the Earth and Mars has about 1/3rd. Asteroids are much smaller than the moon, and an astronaut would feel nearly weightless.

The human body relies on gravity to function properly. The stress of weight on our bones and muscles tells the body to strengthen them, and the blood pressure difference between our feet and our heads tells our body how much blood we need and how strong our heart needs to be. In a weightless or low-gravity environment, the human body lacks these cues, so the body begins to break down bone, muscle, and blood that it thinks it no longer needs.

Astronauts have specialized exercise equipment that they can use while in orbit to simulate the effects of gravity on the body and encourage the body to maintain healthy levels of bone, muscle, and blood. Vitamins can help to replace the calcium and other minerals lost due to weightlessness.

Even with these mitigations, astronauts who have been off of Earth for a long time take months to fully recover once they are back on Earth.

## *Micro-Impacts*

A **micro-impact** occurs when a small particle moving at a very high-speed hits a spacecraft or space suit. These particles can be natural micro-meteoroids such as the dust from a comet, or artificial particles such as small pieces of spacecraft or flecks of paint. Objects in



# EDUCATOR GUIDE | *Educator Background*

orbit, or in transit between planets, are moving extremely fast: thousands of miles per hour. If they run into other objects that are not moving, or that are going that fast in a different direction, the collision can be very dangerous even if the particles are very small. A large grain of sand moving at orbital velocity has an energy comparable to a bullet fired from a gun. Micro-impacts can punch holes in spacecraft or space suits, often with no warning. The best way to protect against this hazard is to design spacecraft with shielding. Thin layers of metal, with some space between them, have been used as **shielding** on spacecraft for many years. A small impact might puncture through the first layer, but in the process, it breaks up into even smaller particles. These particles impact the next layer and are either stopped or break up even more as they pass through. After several layers, the particles are stopped before they reach the sensitive part of the spacecraft. This sort of shielding works for large spacecraft or space stations but is not practical for space suits.

## *Toxic (“poison”) soil on Mars*

The soil on Mars contains chemicals called perchlorates. These chemicals are salts containing a chlorine atom bonded to four oxygen atoms. They are highly soluble in water and are only found in extremely dry climates. Perchlorate is toxic to humans, interfering with the functioning of the thyroid, so astronauts will need to avoid contact with martian soil and dust. Perchlorate is also very chemically reactive, so it can be processed to produce oxygen or as a component of rocket fuel.

## *Regolith (“scratchy soil”) on the Moon and asteroids*

The surface of airless bodies like the Moon and asteroids are covered with a powdery soil called “regolith” formed by billions of years of large and small impacts pulverizing the rocks. Much like volcanic ash, regolith is composed of microscopic shards of glass and rock, making it dangerous for astronauts to inhale. Air filters inside the spacecraft or habitat could help mitigate this hazard by removing regolith dust from the air.

## *Space Junk*

Space junk is human-made debris in orbit, ranging from small pieces and fragments to entire broken spacecraft. Because orbital velocities are so high, colliding with space junk could be disastrous, and the orbits of more than 18,000 pieces of large debris are tracked.

# EDUCATOR GUIDE | *Educator Background*

Smaller debris cannot be tracked and is much more common.

For large pieces of space junk, if there is any chance that the object might collide with the space station, the space station's orbit is slightly modified using small maneuvering thrusters until the danger of collision is over. Since the orbits for these larger objects are well known, a small correction to the space station's orbit ahead of time can allow it to avoid collision.

## *Using Local Resources (Use what is around)*

One of the biggest challenges faced by space missions is that it is difficult and expensive to launch a lot of material from the Earth's surface into space. Missions to the surface of other planets may be able to process materials found on the surface to produce useful resources like water, oxygen, metals, building materials, and rocket fuel. Doing this allows missions to launch with less mass and "live off the land" once they arrive at their destination. Martian soil is toxic due to the presence of perchlorate ions, but these may be used to generate rocket fuel or oxygen, so extracting resources from the soil can also get rid of the toxic chemicals in it! Water may be one of the most valuable resources to find in the solar system. It can be used for drinking, food preparation, cleaning, and it can be chemically separated into oxygen for breathing and hydrogen for fuel. The good news is that water can be found in many places throughout the solar system. The challenges are that it is often present as ice, it is sometimes located deep below the surface and hard to get to, and it may be contaminated. Thus, finding water in the solar system, extracting it and purifying it for use, combined with methods for reusing and recycling it, are some of the more important challenges facing human exploration of the solar system.

## *Growing plants in space*

Plants need many things to grow: soil, nutrients, sunlight, water, oxygen, many of which we take for granted on Earth because plants have evolved to growing in the environment provided by Earth (atmosphere, rain, soil type, soil nutrients, Earth gravity, etc.). In a weightless environment like the space station, astronauts use specially designed soils to wick water to the plants roots without drowning them, and gentle fans to circulate the air. Hydroponic systems are also an option, replacing soil with circulating water. Full-spectrum lights stand in for the sun to provide plants with energy and to tell them which direction to grow. Interestingly,



# EDUCATOR GUIDE | *Educator Background*

weightlessness is not as much of a problem as scientists anticipated: as long as the environment is healthy for them, they can grow in zero-g.

On Mars, plants would have to be grown in climate-controlled greenhouses, and the soil would have to be made safe by removing toxins and adding organic material. In many ways, it would be similar to growing plants on the space station, but the presence of gravity would make some things simpler.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2019/01/plants-flowers-international-space-station-moon-mars/581491/>

<https://www.popsci.com/nasa-growing-food-in-space/>

## *Space Suits and Suitports*

**Space suits** are designed by engineers to protect astronauts from many hazards. Check out this video to learn more about Space Suits and how they are designed for hazards: <https://www.nasa.gov/feature/nasa-spacesuit-development>. A suitport is a specialized door to a spacecraft or habitat, where the back of an astronaut's space suit attaches directly to the door. This allows the astronaut to enter and exit the space suit through the suit's back panel, without ever having to bring the suit inside. Using a suitport cuts down on the amount of dust and soil that are tracked into the living space, helping to mitigate the hazards of regolith, toxic soil, and dust.



# EDUCATOR GUIDE | *Educator Background*

*NASA photo of a practice rover on Earth that has suitports that astronauts use to enter and exit the rover. The astronaut leaves the rover by stepping into the suit from the inside, then sealing off the port as they leave in the suit. Notice how the space suit stays outside at all times, limiting the amount of contamination inside the rover.*

## *Dust Storms*

**Dust storms** happen when strong winds blow over dry, dusty land, lifting the dust into the air and forming a huge cloud of dust. This dust can block out sunlight and make it difficult to see, and dust can clog mechanical devices and hurt the lungs and eyes of people or animals. On Earth, dust storms are most common in the deserts, especially the Sahara desert. Dust storms on Earth are usually local or regional: hundreds of kilometers wide at most. Dust storms on Mars are quite common since the whole planet is a dry, dusty desert. Mars has local and regional dust storms, but sometimes when the conditions are right, dust storms on Mars can grow to cover the entire planet. A planet-wide dust storm in 2018 blocked out the sun on Mars for weeks and ended the Opportunity rover mission. The solar powered rover could not function in the darkness of the dust storm.

## *Hazards Faced by Robots (Use a Robot Instead)*

Robots are used in space exploration because they can be built to withstand conditions that humans could not, and because a robot does not need to return to Earth at the end of its mission. Even though robots can survive where humans cannot, they still face hazards when exploring the solar system. In many cases, the hazards are similar to those faced by humans, but only certain pieces of the robot are sensitive. For example, some parts of a robot can be exposed to extremely low or high temperatures or levels of radiation with no problem as long as key components are protected. One of the key hazards that affects humans but has almost no effect on robots is the vacuum of space. Robots don't need air to breathe and with proper engineering are almost unaffected by vacuum.

Robots don't need to worry about resources such as food, water, or air, but they have their own resources that they need to survive and function. The main resource that robots use is energy. Robots get their energy from batteries, solar panels, or radioisotope power sources.



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | *Educator Background*

For missions where the robot doesn't need to survive for a long time, such as a Venus lander or an atmospheric probe on Jupiter, which will be destroyed by heat and pressure after a couple of hours, just a battery is enough. For longer duration missions, solar panels or radioisotope power sources are used to recharge the batteries. Solar panels work better for missions closer to the sun, but if sunlight is blocked for any reasons, such as by a dust storm on Mars, solar powered robots cannot function. Beyond Mars, the sun is so faint that solar panels need to be huge to provide enough energy, so missions to Mars and beyond often use radioisotope power.

Radioisotope power uses the heat generated by the decay of plutonium to generate heat, which is then turned into electricity to charge the robot's batteries. It is not nuclear fusion or fission, it is a much smaller and more stable (but weaker) source of power. Radioisotope power lasts for a long time, but it slowly decreases at a set rate determined by how quickly the plutonium breaks down into less radioactive materials, so missions that last a long time have less and less power.

Other resources that robots depend on are fuel and coolant. Orbiting and flyby spacecraft use rockets to adjust their direction and maintain stable orbits. Doing this uses rocket fuel. NASA engineers are very good at maneuvering spacecraft using as little fuel as possible, but it does eventually run out. Some scientific instruments need to be kept extremely cold and use coolant such as liquid helium. When the coolant runs out, the instrument doesn't work as well.

Temperature is another hazard for robots. Robots can handle much more extreme temperatures than humans, but they still need to be carefully engineered to make sure that key components such as the batteries and computers don't fail due to hot or cold temperatures. Very cold temperatures can also make it harder for moving parts on robots to function. For example, the robotic arm on the Curiosity rover on Mars needs to be heated up before it is used, which drains energy from the rover's batteries (this is why the arm is rarely used at night: it takes more energy to use when it is colder).

Moving parts in general are a hazard for robots. Since a robot cannot heal like a person, moving parts tend to wear out and break over time, and can become contaminated by dust or soil. For orbiting spacecraft, they often used spinning wheels as gyroscopes to adjust



# EDUCATOR GUIDE | *Educator Background*

which way they are pointing without spending rocket fuel. These “reaction wheels” can break over time. It is not usually possible to send a repair mission, so once something breaks, engineers have to find a way to work around it or accept that the spacecraft can no longer do some things.

Radiation is hazardous to robots as well. They can withstand a lot more than a human, but the computers inside of robots need to be designed so that they do not fail when they are hit with a charged particle. Radiation can also damage the silicon detectors used by cameras on spacecraft, so over time the images degrade in quality.

Landers and rovers also have to worry about hazards on the surface. The landing site has to be chosen so that the robot can touch down safely. Engineers on Earth have to choose a safe path for rovers every time they drive, avoiding obstacles like boulders and cliffs, as well as hazards like loose sand that can trap a rover.



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE*

## Vocabulary

**Apollo Missions:** The Apollo Program was a series of space missions designed to land humans on the Moon and bring them safely back to Earth. It was mostly active from the 1960s - 1970s. We're still analyzing data and samples from the Apollo missions!

**Asteroid:** A rock orbiting the Sun that's too small to be a dwarf planet and does not have a tail of gas and dust like a comet. The size of asteroids ranges from 1,000 km to dust particles.

**Blizzard:** A heavy snow storm with high winds.

**Climate:** The aggregate of weather conditions prevailing in a particular area, or globally, over a long period of time (decades, centuries, or thousands of years).

**Climate Change:** The changing conditions of all of Earth's atmosphere mostly caused by rising amounts of greenhouse gases.

**Drone:** An aircraft or vehicle that does not have a pilot. They're usually controlled with a remote control. Also called unoccupied aerial systems, or UAS.

**Drought:** A long time of unusually low rainfall, leading to a shortage of water.

**Dust storm:** A strong wind storm that carries a lot of dust into the air.

**Earthquake:** Ground shaking in the Earth's surface caused by a sudden shock. Earthquakes are primarily caused by movements in Earth's tectonic plates.

**Filter:** A material or device that removes things you don't want to be there from a liquid or gas.

**Flood:** An overflow of water that submerges land that is usually dry, often caused by extreme weather events such as heavy rain, hurricanes, or melting snow. Flood waters can

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | *Vocabulary*

be partially controlled by placing sandbags to protect buildings and roadways.

**Fire Suppression:** An engineered system that puts out fires.

**Gravity:** The force that attracts objects toward the center of the Earth, or towards any other object with mass (such as a planet, moon, or asteroid).

**Greenhouse Gases:** Gases that trap heat by letting sunlight into the atmosphere, but not letting heat out of the atmosphere.

**Hazard:** A danger. In this activity, an extreme event that occurs naturally and can cause harm to humans.

**Health and Safety Officer:** A person who makes sure everyone has a safe working environment.

**Hurricane:** A large, strong storm with very strong winds and lots of rain.

**Impact:** An explosion caused by an asteroid or comet crashing into the surface of a planet. When a planet has an atmosphere, smaller objects burn up before reaching the ground. Larger objects may explode in midair or create a small crater, causing damage locally. Very large objects are less common but their impacts can devastate an entire region or even the whole planet.

**Insulation:** Materials that prevent heat from moving across them. A jacket is insulation that prevents heat from leaving the body; a refrigerator has insulation that prevents heat from getting into the cold interior.

**International Space Station:** A habitable spacecraft in low Earth orbit where astronauts from all over the world live and conduct science and engineering experiments.



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | *Vocabulary*

**Landslide:** A large movement of rocks and dirt down a slope.

**Mitigate:** To make less severe, serious, or painful.

**NASA:** The National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The US Government's organization for space exploration and planetary science research.

**Planetary Science:** The study of planets, moons, asteroids, and other objects in the solar system.

**Radiation:** Energy that moves from one place to another in the form of waves (like radio waves or visible light) or subatomic particles. Some radiation is bad even in small amounts like gamma rays. Some can hurt you if you are exposed for a long time, like ultraviolet rays (which is what causes sunburn). Some radiation is beneficial like when we use a microwave to heat food or radio waves to listen to music in the car.

**Regolith:** Broken up rocks, like sand or gravel, on top of bedrock. Regolith is often found on the surface of planets or moons that have little or no atmosphere. Sometimes called soil on other planets or moons.

**Rover:** A vehicle sent to another planet or moon to explore by sending pictures and data back to Earth.

**Shielding:** A material that protects the inside from danger. Shields can protect against things like small impacts, radiation, and dust.

**Spacecraft:** A vehicle designed to travel in space.

**Tornado:** A very quickly spinning column of air with extremely high winds.

**Toxic soil:** Dirt and rock that is dangerous to breathe, eat, or grow plants in.

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | *Vocabulary*

**Training:** Teaching a person a skill or type of behavior.

**Tsunami:** A large, fast-moving sea wave. Tsunamis can be caused by earthquakes, underwater landslides, volcanic eruptions, or asteroid impacts.

**Weather:** The state of the atmosphere at a certain place and a certain short time period (minutes to hours to days) with respect to its temperature, humidity, cloud cover, wind, or precipitation.

**Wildfire:** An uncontrolled fire of plants and trees in a rural area. Wildfires can burn down houses, farms, and other buildings if they are not controlled.



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE*

## Materials List

### Unit Materials List

Quantity	Item
1 per youth	Science Notebook
1 per youth	Pencils
1 roll	Clear tape (for prep)
1	Safety <i>Hazards</i> Playmat
1	Safety <i>Hazards</i> cards (Deck A)
1 per group of 4	Mitigate <i>Hazards</i> Playmat
1 per group of 4	<i>PLANETS Hazards</i> cards (Decks B, C, and D)
1 per group of 4	<i>Hazards</i> Card Game Rules

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 1

## Everyday Hazards (40 min)

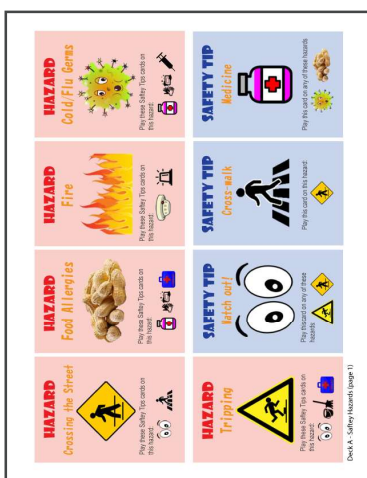
### Overview

In this activity, youth will learn about the concept of hazards and the idea that humans have developed ways to mitigate some of them. Youth act out hazards and safety tips in a form of charades and match appropriate safety tips with their respective hazards in a collaborative card game. Youth also learn the definition of the word “mitigate” and are introduced to the idea that there are careers focused on hazard mitigation.

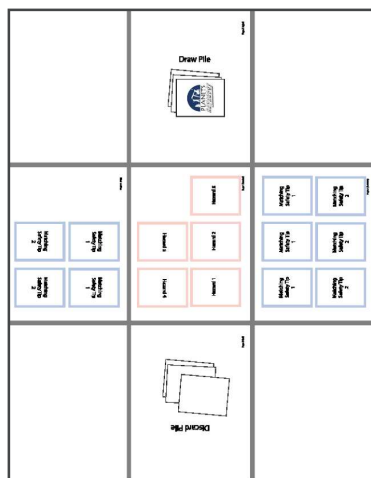
Youth will learn:

- » Humans have developed ways to mitigate safety hazards.

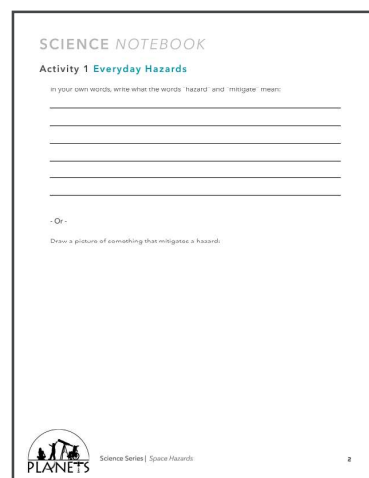
### In this activity:



*Safety Hazards Cards*  
(Deck A)



*Safety Hazards*  
*Playmat*

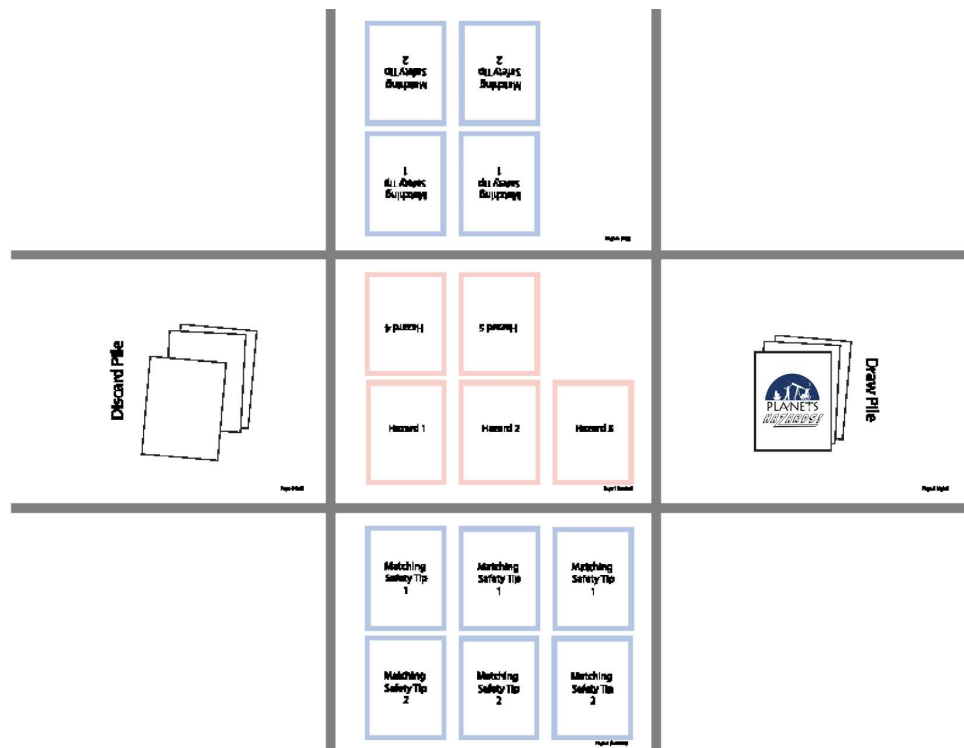


*Science Notebook*

# EDUCATOR GUIDE | Activity 1

## Educator Preparation (1-1.5 hrs)

1. Read through the entire PLANETS Science Series educator guide to learn more about the science content in this unit. This is intended to help educators become familiar with science concepts related to hazards on Earth and in space exploration and how humans have developed ways to mitigate them. Educators can decide which concepts and vocabulary are most appropriate for their group.
2. For Activities 1-4, print one Science Notebook for each youth, in color if possible.
3. For Activity 1: For the whole group:
  - » Print one copy of the Safety Hazards playmat
  - » Tape Safety Hazards playmat together in the arrangement depicted below.
  - » Print one copy of Deck A - Safety Hazards Cards (in color if possible) (14 cards)
  - » Cut these printed card sheets into individual cards with a paper cutter or scissors.
4. Optional: Consider laminating the self-printed cards or using card protectors to preserve materials for future use.





# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 1

## Introduction to *Hazards* (30 min)

- » Ask youth: What are some examples of everyday hazards? Accept all answers. If not stated, give some very simple examples (i.e. germs or slips, trips, and falls, etc.).
- » Define hazard simply as “a danger.”
- » Play a simple matching game of everyday hazards and safety tips with the whole class. The goal of the game is to remove all hazards.

1. Lay out the taped playmat on a table and set one deck of Safety Hazards cards (deck A) (14 cards) facedown on the “Draw pile” location. Gather youth around the Safety Hazards playing mat.

**Tip:** Don't skip the game layout, it scaffolds a more complex game in the following activities.

2. If you have more than 14 youth, split them into pairs.

3. Ask each youth or pair to draw a card from the draw pile in turn until the deck is gone.

4. Split the group into those with Hazard cards on one side of the room and those with Safety Tips cards on the other side of the room.

**Tip:** Pay extra attention to the group that is dealt the hazard card for Tripping and make sure youth are planning on acting it out in a safe way.

5. One at a time, groups will act out their card without speaking words (sound effects are ok). All youth with Hazard cards must go first.

6. When someone guesses the hazard or safety tip, have the acting group place it on the correct location on the playmat.

7. Once a Hazard card has two matching Safety Tip cards lined up underneath it, have youth flip the Hazard card over and put the Safety Tip cards in the discard place on the playmat. This means that the Hazard has been mitigated (the danger has been avoided).

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 1

8. If there are still remaining Hazards cards after all Safety Tips have been played, then shuffle the discard pile and place it in the draw pile location on the playmat.

9. Have volunteer youth or groups draw cards in turn.

## Define Mitigate (8 minutes)

1. Define the concept of mitigation. This is an important word that is used throughout the series and is likely new to youth.

2. Explain to youth: Things that you have done to prepare for or deal with hazards are all examples of ways that humans mitigate hazards. Mitigate means to make less severe, serious, or painful. It also means to make bad things better. We can't solve or stop natural hazards from happening, but we can do things that make them less severe, serious, or painful.

3. Considering the dynamics of your group, try using the following strategies to help the definition sink in:

- » The word mitigate comes from the same root as the word mild, so you can think of it as making severe things mild.
- » You can break down the word into "mitten" and "gate".
  - i. A *mitten* helps mitigate the cold. Your hand still might get cold, but it takes longer.
  - ii. A *gate* helps mitigate fenced animals from getting out and attacking or wandering into the road while letting humans through. An animal still might escape, but it's much less likely than if the gate wasn't there.

4. Sometimes mitigating hazards makes life better for everyone. For example, ramps in sidewalks make crossing the street safer for people in wheelchairs, but it's also easier for bikes, skateboards, and hoverboards. Even people who are walking are less likely to trip.

5. Ask youth to sort through the cards in the safety hazards deck and find the ones that would mitigate the hazards. Lay all these out side-by-side on a table. What do they have in common? Take a couple of minutes to let youth share patterns that they identify. Accept all answers.



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | *Activity 1*

## **Reflect (2 minutes)**

Explain to youth that a Health and Safety Officer is a person who identifies hazards and designs ways to mitigate them. Humans have also designed ways to mitigate bigger natural hazards and even hazards in space using the same idea.

Youth will get a chance to practice their skills as Health and Safety Officers in the rest of the activities in this series.

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 2

## Earth Hazards (50 min)

### Overview

In this activity, youth will learn about hazards on Earth and the idea that humans have developed ways to mitigate some of them. Youth match appropriate mitigation strategies with their hazards in a collaborative card game. Youth also learn in the card game that chance events and human collaboration also play a role in hazard mitigation.

Youth will learn:

- » About different hazards on Earth
- » Humans have developed ways to mitigate hazards

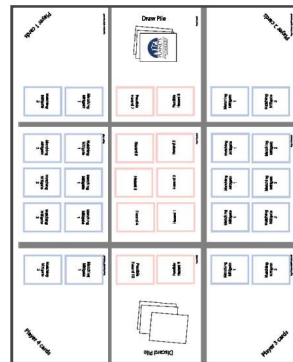
### In this activity:



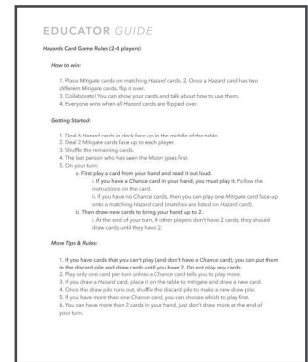
Hazards Cards  
(Decks B & C)



Science Notebook



Mitigate Hazards  
Playmat



Hazards Card  
Game Rules

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | *Activity 2*

## Educator Preparation (40 mins)

» For each group of 3 or 4 youth:

1. Print one copy of the Mitigate Hazards playmat.
2. Tape the pages of the Mitigate Hazards playmat together in the arrangement depicted at the end of this section.
3. Print Deck B - Earth Icons (in color if possible) (11 cards).
4. Print Deck C - Both Earth and Space Icons (in color if possible) (17 cards).
5. Cut the cards with a paper cutter and combine the decks to make individual stacks of 28 cards per deck.
6. Print and post the *Hazards* Card Game rules.
7. **Optional:** Consider laminating the self-printed cards or using card protectors to preserve materials for future use.

**Tip:** You may not need to print and tape the outer pages to make a workable playmat. Determine if using a skeleton version is appropriate for your specific group dynamics or even if youth would intuitively understand the game layout without a playmat.

**Tip:** Print Deck D - Space Icons to save yourself prep time for Activity 3.



# EDUCATOR GUIDE | Activity 2



## Introduction to Natural Hazards (5 min)

» Lead a discussion to introduce the idea that humans must mitigate natural hazards.

1. Ask youth: Think to yourself, what are some natural hazards you can think of? Alternatively, you can shuffle the deck and deal the cards to youth randomly. In this scenario, the youth will find each one of their reservoirs on the corresponding chart and fill in the water droplet values individually.
2. Now ask youth to share their answers one at a time. *Accept all answers.*
3. Add any hazards listed below that were not already stated:

# EDUCATOR GUIDE | Activity 2

Lightning	Extreme Hot/Cold	Flood
Wildfire	Earthquake	Drought
Structure Fire	Landslide	Tsunami
Hurricane	Duststorm	Impact
Tornado	Volcano	

4. Next, choose one example from the original list that is the most relatable to your particular group of youth.

» Ask: What are some things people could do to mitigate (prepare for or deal with) this hazard? *Accept all answers. Examples include warm clothing for a blizzard, staying inside during storms with lightning, watering schedules for drought, evacuation for wildfire, not going on a planned vacation because of a volcanic eruption, etc.*

**Tip:** While its best to discuss hazards that are locally relevant and therefore more relatable to youth, be mindful of the potential for trauma, especially if you live in an area that was hard hit by a natural disaster in recent years.

## Getting to Know the Cards (10 min)

1. Distribute card decks B (Earth Icons) & C (Both Earth and Space Icons) to groups of 3-4. Note: There are not enough cards to accommodate more than 4 players in a group for the next activity.
2. Have youth sort through the Hazard cards and pull out the cards that they believe are most dangerous and least dangerous in their own view.
3. Have youth sort through the Mitigate cards and pull out the cards that they believe are most useful and least useful in their own view.
4. Ask youth if any group would like to volunteer their choices and share why they chose their cards. All answers can be valid if supported with reasoning.



# EDUCATOR GUIDE | Activity 2

## Hazards on Earth Card Game (25 min)

» Set-up and play a collaborative card game that allows students to choose how to best mitigate hazards on Earth.

1. Introduce the idea and reason for the game. NASA missions must mitigate hazards when they explore space and this is easier to do if we first learn how humans mitigate hazards on Earth. In fact, some of the hazards are the same!

2. Each group of 3 or 4 youth should have card decks B & C. There are not enough cards to accommodate more than 4 players in a group.

3. Pass out the rules of the game (1 copy per group). Let youth know that the game is a lot like the one they played in Activity 1. The goal is to mitigate all hazards as a team.

4. Review the “Getting Started Section” of the Rules with the whole group.

5. Start game play. Circle around to all groups and check for understanding of the rules, vocabulary, and concepts. For example, if you see *Filters* in someone’s hands, say can anyone tell me what *Filters* means and why it would be useful in a dust storm? Another example, “Oh I see you have a chance card, you must play that one first” or “Looks like there is nothing you can use Sand Bags for, did you know you can use your turn to trade that for a new card?”

**Tip:** Having more players in a group encourages collaboration because they can see more cards at one time. Players can warn each other and play their hands with other’s cards in mind.

**Tip:** The game can be made quicker by dealing less hazards. The game can be made easier by taking out a couple Chance cards with negative effects. The game can be made harder by taking out a couple Chance cards with positive effects. Read the card carefully to make sure you are removing the intended effect.



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 2

## Hazards Card Game Rules (2-4 players)

### How to win:

1. Place *Mitigate* cards on matching *Hazard* cards.
2. Once a *Hazard* card has two different *Mitigate* cards, flip it over.
3. Collaborate! You can show your cards and talk about how to use them.
4. Everyone wins when 6 *Hazard* cards are flipped over.

### Getting Started:

1. Deal 6 *Hazard* cards in deck face up in the middle of the table.
2. Deal 2 *Mitigate* cards face up to each player.
3. Shuffle the remaining cards.
4. The last person who has seen the Moon goes first.
5. On your turn:
  - a. First play a card from your hand and read it out loud.
    - i. If you have a *Chance* card in your hand, you must play it. Follow the instructions on the card.
    - ii. If you have no *Chance* cards, then you can play one *Mitigate* card face-up onto a matching *Hazard* card (matches are listed on *Hazard* card).
  - b. Then draw new cards to bring your hand up to 2.
    - i. At the end of your turn, if other players don't have 2 cards, they should draw cards until they have 2.

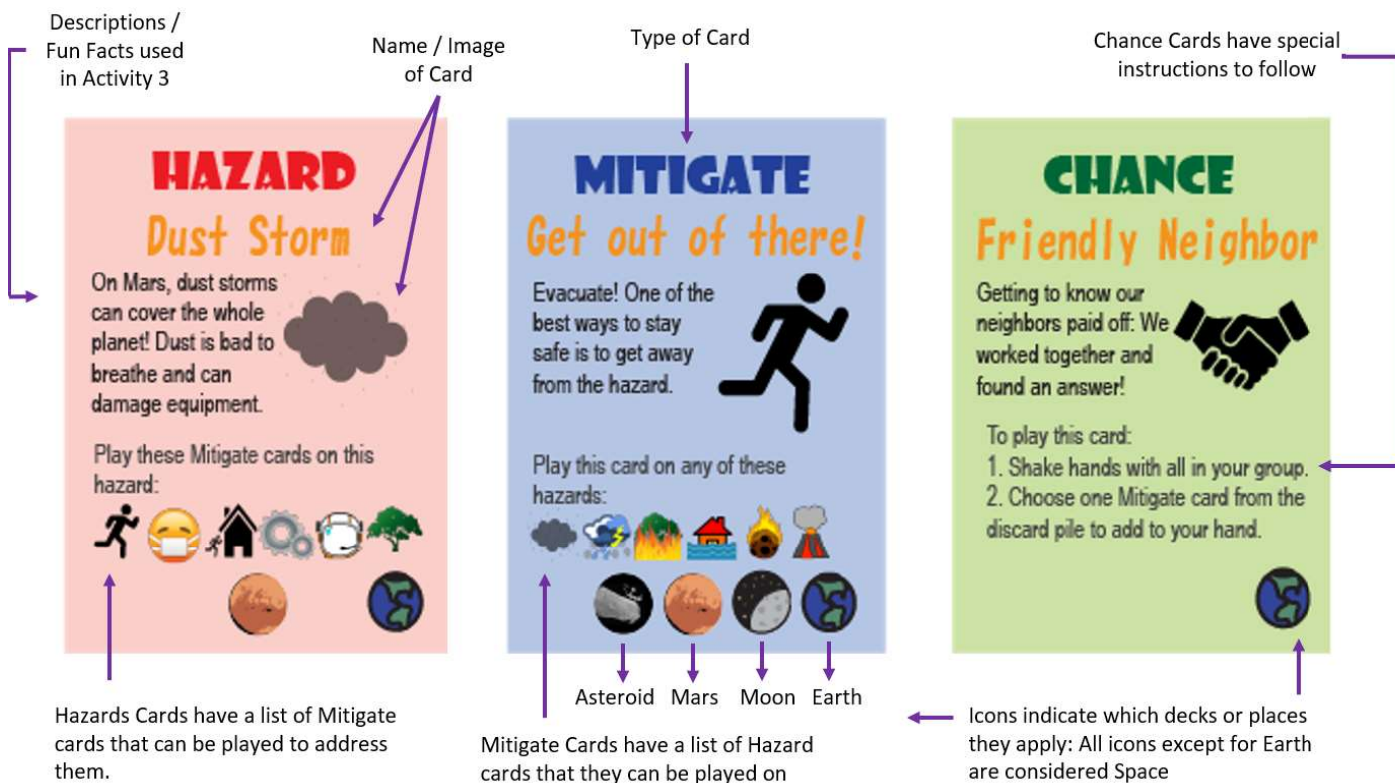
### More Tips & Rules:

1. If you have cards that you can't play (and don't have a *Chance* card), you can put them in the discard pile and draw cards until you have 2. Do not play any cards.
2. Play only one card per turn unless a *Chance* card tells you to play more.
3. If you draw a *Hazard* card, place it on the table to mitigate and draw a new card.
4. Once the draw pile runs out, shuffle the discard pile to make a new draw pile.
5. If you have more than one *Chance* card, you can choose which to play first.
6. You can have more than 2 cards in your hand, just don't draw more at the end of your turn.



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 2

## Hazards Cards Explanation



### Icons:

Each card has its own large image or icon near the top plus rows of other icons listed below. Note that one row of icons indicates potential matches for hazards and mitigation strategies. The other (bottom row) indicates what environment the card is known to apply to. For example, some cards just have an Earth icon, meaning they are only applicable on Earth, but others may have an icon for the Moon, Mars, and/or an asteroid. These environment icons are used by youth in Activity 4, and used throughout the unit by educators to sort the cards into Decks B (Earth icons only), C (Earth and Space icons), and D (Space icons only).

Icons were either designed for this project or taken from Creative Commons for educational and non-commercial purposes.

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 2

## Reflect (5 min)

Lead a discussion to reflect on Earth's hazards and how humans have developed ways to mitigate them. Use 2 or 3 of the following questions to guide the discussion:

- » Are there hazards in the card game that are harder to mitigate than others?  
*Accept all answers.*
- » Are some hazards in the real world harder to mitigate than others? *Yes, in the real world, an impact would be harder to mitigate.*
- » Are some hazards in the real world harder to mitigate than others? *Yes, in the real world, a meteor impact would be harder to mitigate.*
- » Are there some mitigations that work for all or a lot of different hazards? *Yes, emergency kit, engineering, and training mitigate all hazards.*
- » What chance events made it easier to solve hazards? *Teamwork helped a lot; Research, early warning system, and friendly neighbors helped too.*
- » Are there multiple ways to mitigate hazards? *Yes, all hazards have at least 2 ways to mitigate them. In real life this is true too; a hazard is better mitigated if you use multiple strategies.*
- » Do you think humans can develop ways to mitigate hazards in space like we have on Earth? *Sure we can! Let's check it out in the next activity.*



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 3

## Hazards in Space (45 min)

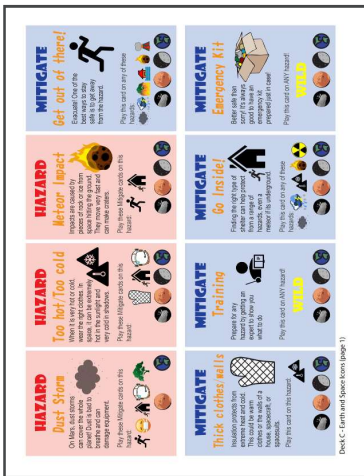
### Overview

In this activity, youth will learn that hazards also exist in space, and that some are the same as they are on Earth, and some are different. Youth also learn about hazards that are the same or different between the Moon, Mars, and asteroids. Humans have developed ways to mitigate some space hazards. Youth match mitigation strategies with hazards in the same collaborative card game as activity 1, with different cards.

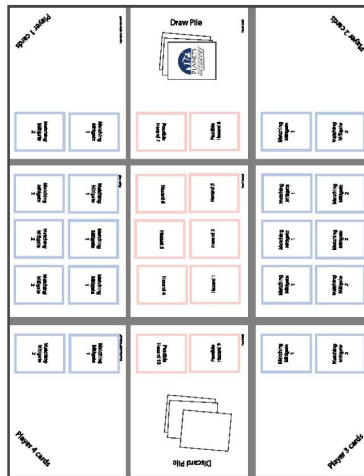
Youth will learn:

- » Hazards can be the same or different between the Earth and space.
- » Hazards can be the same or different between the Moon, Mars, and asteroids.
- » Humans have developed ways to mitigate some hazards in space.

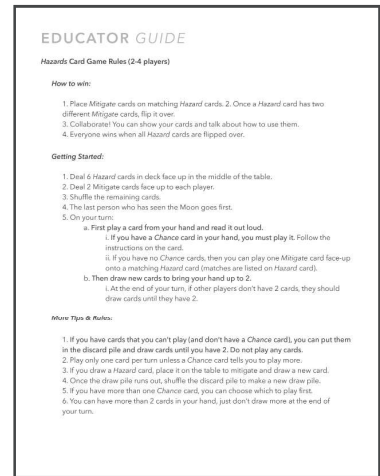
### In this activity



Hazards Cards  
(Decks C & D)



Mitigate Hazards  
Playmat



Hazards Card  
Game Rules

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | *Activity 3*

## Educator Preparation (30 min)

» For each group of 3 or 4 youth:

1. Set out the Mitigate Hazards Playmat from the last activity.
2. For each card deck from the last activity, sort out Deck C - Earth and Space Icons (17 cards).
3. Print Deck D - Space Icons (in color if possible) (17 cards).
4. Cut the cards with a paper cutter
5. Combine Decks C and D to make individual stacks of 35 cards per deck.
6. Set out the *Hazards* Card Game rules sheets from the last activity for each group.
7. Optional: Consider laminating the self-printed cards or using card protectors to preserve materials for future use.
8. Optional: Consider including blank cards for youth to make up their own hazard and mitigate scenarios.
9. Have the Educator Background section of this guide (pp. 18-28) on-hand for youth questions.

## Introduction (5 min)

» Lead a discussion using the following questions to introduce the idea that humans must mitigate hazards to explore space.

1. What do you think might be some hazards that NASA missions must mitigate in space in order to explore? *Accept all answers. Some examples are no air, no food, no water, and space radiation.*



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 3

- a. Choose the example stated that is the most relatable to your group of youth.
2. What are some things you think NASA has done or could do to mitigate these hazards? *Accept all answers. Mitigation strategies for examples stated above are bringing or growing food, re-using water, and using space suits and spacecrafts that keep out or shield radiation and keep in air brought from Earth.*
3. Do you think that visiting different places in space like the Moon and Mars would have different hazards to mitigate? *“Let’s see!”*

## Getting to Know the Cards (10 min)

1. Distribute card decks C (Earth and Space Icons) and D (Space Icons) to groups of 3-4.  
*Note: There are not enough cards to accommodate more than 4 players in a group for the next activity.*
2. Have youth identify 1 card they would like to know more about. Ask for one or two volunteers to share a card, then read the corresponding section of the Educator Guide Background section. Explain to youth that you will come around during game play to answer remaining questions.
3. Have youth sort through the Hazard cards and pull 1 card that they believe is most dangerous. Ask for one or two volunteers to share a card and explain why they chose it.
4. Have youth sort through the Mitigate cards and pull out 1 card that they believe is most useful. Ask for one or two volunteers to share a card and explain why they chose it.

## Hazards in Space (20 min)

Set-up and play the same collaborative card game that allows students to choose how to best mitigate hazards in space.

1. Review game and cards. Explain that the rules of the game are the same and that only the

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 3

cards have changed. NASA missions must mitigate hazards when they explore space.

**Tip:** If groups finished late in Activity 1, remove a couple hazard cards. If groups struggled or became frustrated in Activity 1, remove a couple chance cards that have negative effects. Read the cards carefully, some chances are helpful.

2. **Optional:** Have youth check and remove all the cards that have the Earth icon only.

3. Play the game! Rules can be handed out again for youth who missed the previous activity, or as reminders for situations like having cards that can't be played, especially if you removed cards to make the game shorter (see Educator Tip box above).

4. Circle around to all groups. Ask which cards they want to know more about and read or point out the information in the educator background section of this guide.

## Reflect (10 min)

Lead a discussion to reflect on hazards in space and how humans have developed ways to mitigate them. Use 2 or 3 of the following questions to guide the discussion:

- » Are there examples of hazards that exist in multiple locations in space?  
*According to the cards, No food/water/air, Space Radiation, and Low gravity are all hazards that exist on the Moon, Mars, and asteroids. Mars might have more gravity than an asteroid but it's still 1/3rd of Earth's.*
- » Are there examples of space hazards that are only in some places that we want to visit and not others? *Yes, examples from the cards include: Poison Soil (Mars), Scratchy Soil or Regolith (Moon), and Micro-impact (Moon and asteroid).*
- » Are there hazards that are only a problem in space and never on Earth?  
*No actually, there are lots of places on Earth with "space hazards": There is no fresh water to drink in dry deserts or salt oceans. There is no air to breathe any place underwater. Lots of places and people don't have food to eat. Some radiation reaches*



## EDUCATOR GUIDE | Activity 3

*us here too and gives us sunburns. Some places on Earth have contaminated or poisonous soil. Volcanoes spew out scratchy soil in the form of ash. Airplane pilots have to get used to differences in gravity when they fly. The big difference is that no place in space has its own air or food, and water we've found on planetary surfaces isn't drinkable or even liquid. All of the soil on Mars is poisonous and all of the dust on the moon is scratchy. Gravity is different in space everywhere you go for the entire time you're there.*

- » *Are some mitigation strategies that we use on Earth the same as what we use to mitigate hazards in space? Yes, some examples from the cards include: Get out of there (evacuate), Go inside, Filters, Engineering, Thick clothes/walls (Insulation), Emergency Kit, and Training.*
- » *Are there mitigations that are different between Earth and Space? Again, not really. There are things that must be done in space more often than here on Earth to survive like shielding from radiation, taking vitamins, growing your own food, using robots, re-using water, using what's around (local resources), and exercising. We often do these things here on Earth though. Advances in space exploration have also helped drive better living here on Earth.*
- » *What do you think would be harder to mitigate in real life, hazards on Earth or hazards in space? Accept all opinions.*



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 4

## Mitigate Hazards for your Mission (55 min)

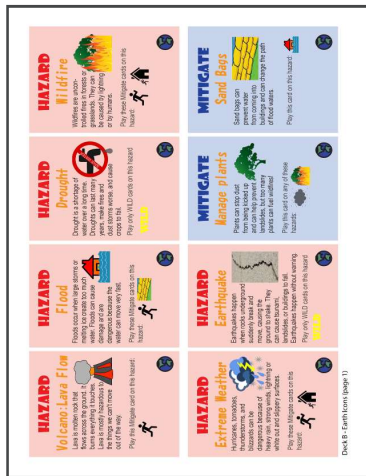
### Overview

Youth choose one of 4 proposed NASA missions and present what hazards, mitigation strategies, and other factors NASA needs to consider and employ. The missions youth are considering are both human and robotic. They launch on Earth, and visit the Moon, Mars, or asteroids.

Youth will learn:

- » Some hazards are different between the Earth, Moon, Mars, and asteroids and some are the same.
- » Human versus robotic missions must mitigate different hazards.
- » Different types of missions have different hazards.

### In this activity



Hazards Cards  
(Decks B, C, & D)



Science Notebook

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 4

## Educator Preparation (10 min)

1. Have access to the educator background guide ready if youth inquire as directed in the science notebook.
2. For each group of 3 or 4 youth: Combine card decks B, C, & D (all icon combinations) into full decks for each group.

## Introduction (5 min)

- » Explain to youth that NASA needs Health and Safety Officers for their upcoming missions. A Health and Safety Officer identifies and comes up with a plan to mitigate hazards. Let youth know that today they will use what they have learned so far about hazards and survival on Earth and space to prepare a presentation for NASA as Health and Safety Officers.
- » Pass out card decks B, C, & D to each group.

## Assign Mission (5 min)

Explain Assign each group one NASA mission (described below and in Student Notebook) according to group dynamics. They are listed in increasing order of complexity.

1. We're launching a rocket! What Earth hazards might be present on the launch day at Kennedy Space Center in Florida, and how can we mitigate them? What other chance factors might impact the launch?
2. We're going back to the Moon! Technology has improved a lot since the Apollo missions of the 1960's and 1970's, and once we get there, we need to identify and mitigate hazards with a fresh new take.
3. We are sending a person to Mars for the first time ever! What hazards and chance factors should the Mars team plan for and how should they mitigate them?



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | Activity 4

4. We want to land an unoccupied spacecraft on an asteroid, get samples, and bring them back to Earth. What should we know that will keep the spacecraft and robots safe from damage?

## Identify Hazards and Mitigations for Your Mission (10 min)

» Explain the process. Let youth know that as they review their cards, they should keep in mind that they will need to share their results with the whole group.

1. We're launching a rocket! What Earth hazards might be present on the launch day at Kennedy Space Center in Florida, and how can we mitigate them? What other chance factors might impact the launch?

2. Sort through all the Mitigate cards by icon to identify which apply to your hazards.

3. Sort through all the Chance cards by icon to identify what other factors might either help or hurt your efforts to mitigate the hazards.

4. **Optional:** Based on available technology, consider having youth do additional online research about their mission in addition to the cards.

**Tip:** It's important to highlight that there might be hazards on other planets we don't know about yet since we have never been there. We also may not know if mitigation strategies we use in other places will work on every planet.

## Prepare for the Presentation (15 min)

1. Ask groups to make a list of hazards, mitigations, and chance factors using the table in their Science Notebooks. They may use this list, brainstorm new ideas, and take notes to use for their presentation. Alternatively, youth can arrange or display their cards in a way that they can follow for the presentation.

2. As groups are working, help guide their thinking by asking:

a. Which hazards do you think are the most likely? Which do you think are the least likely?

# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | *Activity 4*

**Tip:** The presentation is a chance for youth to explain their thinking and reflect on what they learned about space hazards throughout the unit. Youth can present and share in a variety of ways, including:

- » Invite youth to rank the hazards by most likely to least likely and mitigate cards by easiest to hardest on a poster board.
- » Ask youth to write a compelling argument to NASA about what to consider and read it aloud.
- » Invite youth to organize a play that acts out the top three hazards and mitigations. A group of 4 could have one role for the Hazard, 2 for Mitigate, and one for Chance. Repeat for the next 2 sets.
- » Youth could also write and act out a play or draw a comic that has astronauts and mission control mitigating hazards.

c. Which mitigations do you think are the easiest, cheapest, or apply to the most hazards?

## Share Out and Discussion (25 min)

Explain to youth that each group will present to NASA as Health and Safety Officers for their mission.

Ask groups to share which mission they were assigned and what hazards, mitigations, and other chance factors they identified.

Try pulling in outsiders as an authentic audience and having groups address the crowd as NASA mission control or astronauts.

## Reflect (5 min)

Lead a discussion about the different hazards and strategies presented between the groups



# EDUCATOR *GUIDE* | *Activity 4*

using 2 or 3 of the following questions:

- » What hazards did the human missions (Earth launch, Moon, and Mars) often have to mitigate?
- » Did anyone use robotics to mitigate a hazard during a human mission?
- » If you had a robotic mission, what were the hazards you identified and how did you mitigate them?
- » What place would you most like to visit in the solar system and why? Have youth share a few examples.
- » Do you think we should send people or robots to those places? Why?

Congratulate youth on their excellent scientific work. Let them know that identifying hazards and mitigations in advance is important so that no one gets hurt and the mission can succeed.