

The Milky Way Galaxy

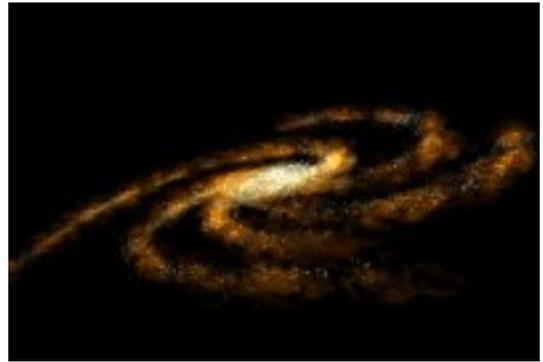
By Cindy Grigg

¹ Our solar system is a small part of a galaxy. Galaxy is the name given to a large system of stars, planets, gas, and dust. Gravity holds a galaxy together. Our galaxy is called the Milky Way galaxy. It has an estimated 200 billion other stars besides our own sun. At least some of these other stars have planets orbiting around them.

² As a galaxy, the Milky Way is actually a giant. Its diameter is about 100,000 light years. A light year is the distance that light travels in one year. A light year is about 9.5 trillion kilometers or about 6 trillion miles.

³ The Milky Way is a barred spiral galaxy with four arms. This means it is a spiral shape with a bar of bright stars in the center running across the middle. There are four arms that look like they trail off the bar. Our solar system is located in a smaller spiral arm called the Local Group or Orion Arm.

⁴ Our solar system is about 4.6 billion years old. Our sun is a young star. Scientists think the Milky Way galaxy may be about 14 billion years old.



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<p>1. What is a galaxy?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A A large system of stars held together by gravity</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B The universe</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C The solar system</p>	<p>2. We live in the _____.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Orion galaxy</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B The Local galaxy</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C The Milky Way galaxy</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D Andromeda galaxy</p>
<p>3. Our sun is the only star to have planets orbiting it.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>	<p>4. The Milky Way is a small galaxy.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>
<p>5. How big is the Milky Way galaxy?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A 100,000 light years across</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B 6 trillion miles across</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C 9.5 trillion kilometers across</p>	<p>6. The Milky Way is described as _____.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A An irregular galaxy</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B A barred spiral galaxy</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C A spiral galaxy</p>
<p>7. Our solar system is in the middle of the galaxy.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>	<p>8. How old is the Milky Way galaxy?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A 10 billion years old</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B 4.6 billion years old</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C 14 billion years old</p>

