

# Unit 7

## Vocabulary Cards

Skills Strand  
GRADE 3

Core Knowledge Language Arts®



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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**

**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**)

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

**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

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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**)