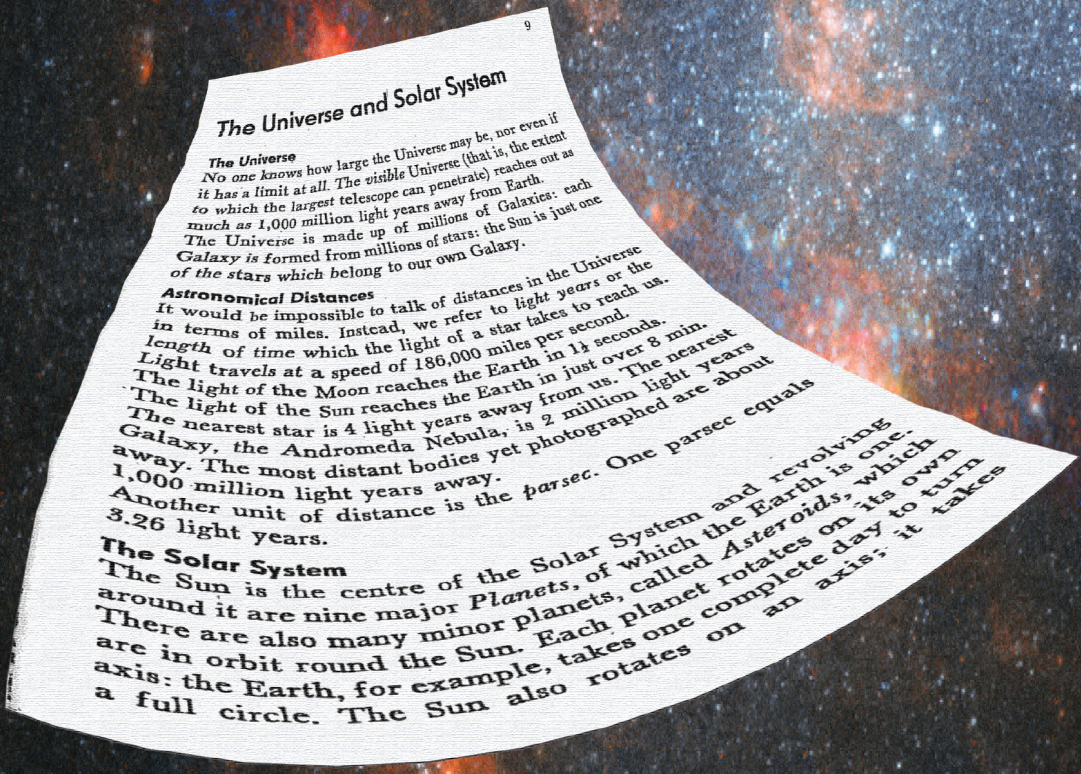
The Distant Bodies



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The Universe and Solar System

The Universe

No one knows how large the Universe may be, nor even if it has a limit at all. The visible Universe (that is, the extent to which the largest telescope can penetrate) reaches out as much as 1,000 million light years away from Earth.

The Universe is made up of millions of Galaxies: each Galaxy is formed from millions of stars: the Sun is just one of the stars which belong to our own Galaxy.

Astronomical Distances

It would be impossible to talk of distances in the Universe in terms of miles. Instead, we refer to light years or the length of time which the light of a star takes to reach us.

Light travels at a speed of 186,000 miles per second.

The light of the Moon reaches the Earth in 1¼ seconds.

The light of the Sun reaches the Earth in just over 8 min.

The nearest star is 4 light years away from us. The nearest Galaxy, the Andromeda Nebula, is 2 million light years away. The most distant bodies yet photographed are about 1,000 million light years away.

Another unit of distance is the *parsec*. One parsec equals 3.26 light years.

The Solar System

The Sun is the centre of the Solar System and revolving around it are nine major *Planets*, of which the Earth is one. There are also many minor planets, called *Asteroids*, which are in orbit round the Sun. Each planet rotates on its own axis: the Earth, for example, takes one complete day to turn a full circle. The Sun also rotates on an axis; it takes

The Distant Bodies is a zine made by Glasgow Women's Library's Summer 2019 Create and Connect group. Each piece is a found poem created in response to a page titled 'The Universe and Solar System' from the 1966 edition of The Girl's Handbook, held in the Glasgow Women's Library archives.

This zine was designed by Jinling Wu. The photos used in this zine are from NASA Gallery.

Contents

Anita Jeyam

No one knows the Universe even though it reaches out for 1,000 million light-years.
Stars refer to light-years at a speed of 186,000 miles per second.
The Moon only reaches the thousand most photographed distant bodies;
while the minor sun rotates on the Earth and travels to Andromeda.
And the Universe... knows everyone.

Louise Terry

Light years.
The light of the Moon.
The light of the Sun.
The Galaxy,
Andromeda Nebula.
Parsec.
Planets.
Asteroids orbit the Sun.
The Earth takes
One complete day to
turn a full circle.

Amy Fairbairn
(In)Finity

1,000 million light years
Millions of galaxies
Formed from millions of stars
Impossible distances
Distant bodies
One Earth.

Laura Lodahl

The Length of Time

No one knows the visible
1,000 million light years away
distant bodies
revolving around one of the stars,
Light travels
186,000 miles per second
impossible to talk of,
another unit of distance
the earth rotates on its own axis,
light years away from us
millions of galaxies
in orbit around the centre.

Abi Hayes

Distant Bodies

We, the nearest
yet most distant bodies
in our own galaxy
astronomical distances
reach out away from us
impossible to talk at all
we are just another star
in the distance
No one knows how
nor even if we belong,
each one of us a planet
complete on its own

Jinling Wu

Penetrate the Galaxy

No one knows
how far it takes to reach our own stars.
Yet we travel, revolve and rotate,
Until we reach the distant bodies.

Barbara Munro

Universe

How large the Universe!
Limitless, impenetrable;
only starlight.
Galaxies, asteroids and nebulae,
impossible to count,
yet in the centre,
the Sun,
reaching out,
visible.

Victoria McIntyre

Complete Day

The light of the Moon,
The light of the Sun,
The most distant bodies–
Of which the Earth is One.

Each galaxy is formed,
Two million light years away.
The length of time–
Impossible to talk of,
In one Complete Day.