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Activities

The Dwarf Planet Club

Name: _____ Date: _____

Pluto was kicked off the official list of planets in 2006 after astronomers fine-tuned the definition of a planet. It became one of the newly-named dwarf planets. In this Planet Diary activity, you'll learn what it takes to get admitted to this "club." Then you'll meet its current members.

Directions

- Start by reading this Planet Diary report Pity Poor Pluto: It's Been Demoted. Answer Workspace question 1.
- Go to Star Child's The Planets and Dwarf Planets. Read the second paragraph, then answer question 2.
- Explore Pluto by checking out the *Facts, Did You Know?*, and *Answer* links on the bottom of the page.
- The next dwarf planet is Ceres. Read its story and follow the *Facts, Did You Know*, and *Answer* links. Answer question 3.
- On to Eris. Find out what astronomers have learned about it, then answer question 4.
- Continue your tour with a visit to Haumea. Answer question 5.
- Complete the tour with a look at Makemake. Use the info to answer the last question.

Workspace

1. Why does Pluto fall short of the definition of a planet?

2. Why did astronomers need to change the definition of a planet?

3. Where is Ceres found? Why is it of interest to scientists?

4. How does Eris compare in size to the other dwarf planets?

5. What's odd about Haumea's shape? How did it get that way?

6. What's unusual about Makemake's color? Explain why it's that color.

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