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Activities

Rocking Out on Mars

Name: _____ Date: _____

What's it like on the surface of Mars? Thanks to explorations by rovers Spirit and Opportunity and other spacecraft, our knowledge of Martian geology is exploding. You'll find out more in this Planet Diary activity.

Directions

- Visit NASA's Mars Exploration Program for a look at the Geology of Mars. One of the first things you notice about the Red Planet's surface is its huge volcanoes. Read the two paragraphs. Click the picture of Olympus Mons to enlarge it and read the caption. Then answer Workspace question 1.
- Scroll to *Magnetism of Mars Gives Clues to the Planet's Interior*. Read the paragraph and click to enlarge the picture. Answer question 2.
- Continue to *Rocks on Mars Can Tell Us About the Planet's History*. Click the picture of Twin Peaks and read the caption. Answer question 3.
- Read these Planet Diary stories about recent discoveries about the geology of Mars, then answer the corresponding questions:
    - Mars Rover Finds New Signs of Water (question 4)
    - Mars Probably Wetter Longer (question 5)
    - New Evidence of Microbes on Mars (question 6)

Workspace

1. Explain how and why volcanoes on Mars are different from those found on Earth.

2. What did Mars Global Surveyor learn about magnetism on Mars?

3. What clues in Martian rocks and minerals raise the possibility of ancient life and water on the planet?

4. What new evidence did Spirit find of water on Mars?

5. Name the three types of minerals found on Mars that likely formed in water. Describe the conditions in which each mineral may have formed.

6. What did the discovery of silica and titanium in the soil suggest about the possibility of finding signs of microbes?

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