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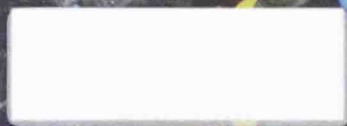
美国中小學生拓展讀本

**阅读广角**

**Level 4D**

**Earth Science & Physical Science**

地球科学 & 物质科学



全国百佳图书出版单位  
中国出版政府奖先进出版单位



**浙江教育出版社**

ZHEJIANG EDUCATION PUBLISHING HOUSE

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READING FOR  
INFORMATION

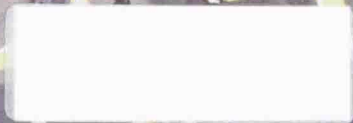
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浙江教育出版社 · 杭州

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

阅读广角 = Reading for information level. 4D /  
美国麦格劳希尔教育编. — 杭州: 浙江教育出版社,  
2014. 11

ISBN 978-7-5536-2405-1

I. ①阅… II. ①美… III. ①英语—阅读教学—小学  
—课外读物 IV. ①G624.313

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2014)第251617号

## 阅读广角

## READING FOR INFORMATION

## Level 4D

出版发行 浙江教育出版社(杭州市天目山路40号 邮编 310013)

原著名 Reading For Information

原出版 McGraw-Hill Education

责任编辑 屠凌云 沈子清

封面设计 韩波

责任校对 杨艳

责任印务 温劲风

图文制作 君红阅读(北京)出版咨询有限公司

印刷 浙江新华数码印务有限公司

开本 787mm×960mm 1/16

印张 11.75

字数 117 500

版次 2014年11月第1版

印次 2014年11月第1次印刷

印数 0 001-5 000

标准书号 ISBN 978-7-5536-2405-1

定价 28.00元

联系电话: 0571-85170300-80928

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## 阅读广角 Level 4D

McGraw-Hill Education

978-0-07-610242-6

978-0-07-610246-4

978-0-07-610250-1

978-0-07-610243-3

978-0-07-610247-1

978-0-07-610251-8

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# READING FOR INFORMATION


Earth Science & Physical Science

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# Compounds and Mixtures

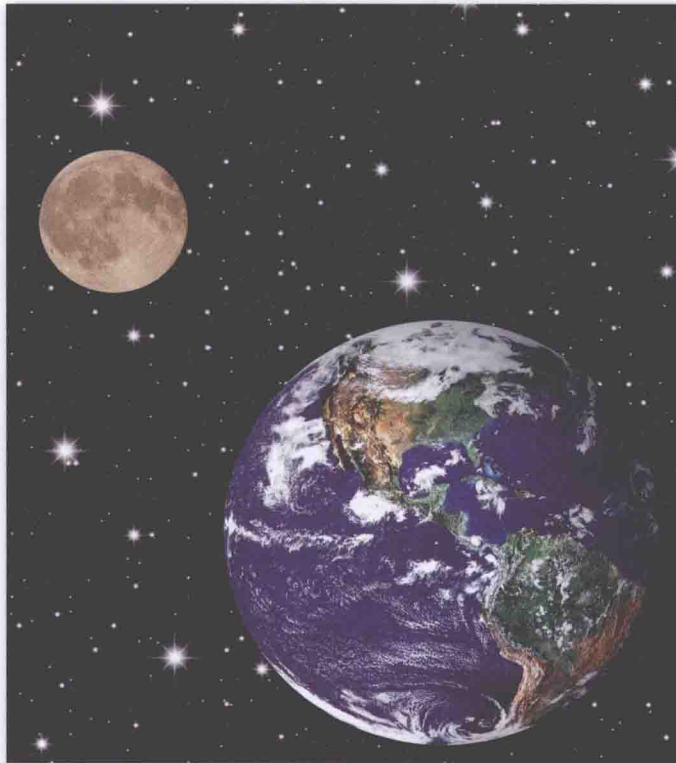
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# EARTH SCIENCE

## Earth and Its Neighbors



# Before You Read

Here are some things you can do to help you read for information.

## Features **Charts**

Charts can help you visually understand information. There are many different kinds of charts.

- Sequence charts and flowcharts show the order of steps in a process or an event.
- T-charts and two-column charts compare or contrast two things.
- Organizational charts show the relationships in an organization, group or family.

This organizational **chart** describes two groups of objects.

Planets	Distance to sun (in kilometers)	Diameter (in kilometers)	Did you know?	
Inner Planets	<b>Mercury</b>	58 million	4,879	A year on Mercury lasts 88 days.
	<b>Venus</b>	108 million	12,104	Temperatures on Venus reach about 465° C.
	<b>Earth</b>	150 million	12,756	Earth's atmosphere protects the surface from space hazards.
	<b>Mars</b>	228 million	6,794	Rust gives Mars its reddish color.
Outer Planets	<b>Jupiter</b>	778 million	142,884	Jupiter rotates faster than any other planet.
	<b>Saturn</b>	1,426 million	120,536	Winds on Saturn can blow at 500 meters per second.
	<b>Uranus</b>	2,870 million	51,118	A day on Uranus lasts only about 17 hours.
	<b>Neptune</b>	4,498 million	49,528	Neptune's orbit takes about 165 Earth years.

## Structures Cause and Effect

- A cause is the reason something happens. The signal words *when*, *if* and *because* show cause.
- The effect is what happens. The signal words *then*, *so* and *therefore* show effect.

The word *because* tells you this is a **cause-and-effect** sentence.

Because it takes Earth 24 hours to turn one time on its axis, one full day on Earth is 24 hours long.

This sentence explains what **causes** a day on Earth to last 24 hours.

- You can make a simple diagram to help you identify cause-and-effect relationships when you read.

It takes Earth 24 hours to rotate one time on its axis.

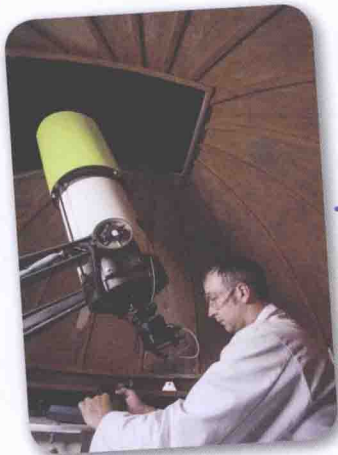
**Cause**

One full day on Earth is 24 hours long.

**Effect**

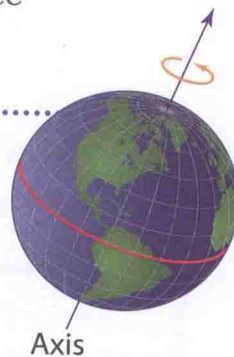
## ABC Vocabulary Words to Know

**asteroid** a small rocky object that orbits the sun



**astronomer** a scientist who studies the sun, moon, stars, planets, and other bodies in space

**axis** a real or imaginary line through the center of a spinning object



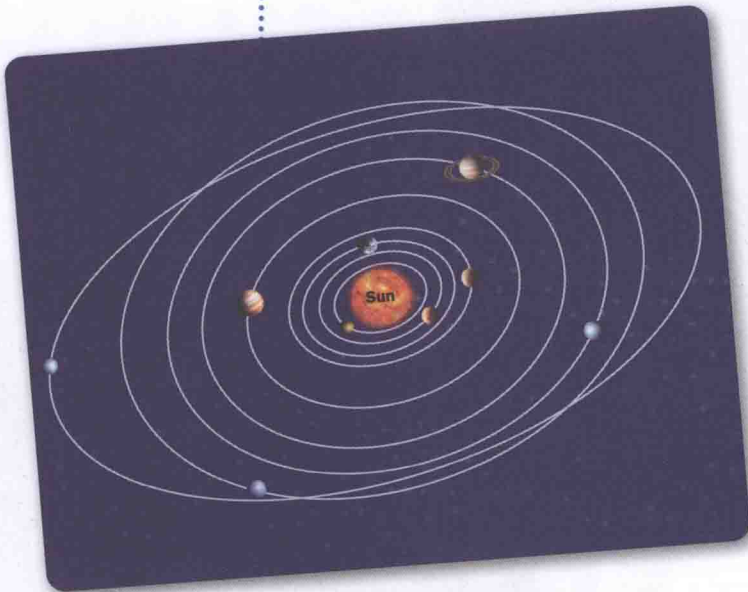
**comet** a dirty snowball orbiting the sun—a mixture of ices, frozen gases, rock, and dust left over from the formation of the solar system

**meteor** a chunk of rock from space that burns up as it travels through Earth's atmosphere



Sometimes you can see **meteors** move through Earth's atmosphere.

**solar system** the sun and the objects that orbit it



The **solar system** contains eight planets. *Can you name them?*

# Earth and Its Neighbors

## The Big Question

What is a solar system, and how does Earth's movement in the solar system affect life on our planet?





## Early Astronomers

Imagine that you are living 7,000 years ago. There are no grocery stores. To eat, you and your family hunt and grow crops. This is hard work! Most crops do not grow year-round and many animals can be found only during certain seasons. Because of this, it is very important to know what time of the year it is. But there are no calendars, newspapers, or clocks to help you. What would you do? You would rely on the night sky and the changes in your environment in order to know what to do. That is just what farmers and hunters did. Scientists think that farmers and hunters might have been our earliest astronomers.

Stone circles, such as Stonehenge in England, were built thousands of years ago. Scientists think the stones may have been used for religious ceremonies, to track changes in the sky, or to keep track of time.

# Astronomers Make Discoveries

An **astronomer** is a scientist who studies the sun, moon, stars, planets, and other bodies in space. Early astronomers may have been ancient hunters and farmers who looked to the skies to help them tell time. We look to the sky to tell time as well. For example, we know that night is over when the sun rises and it grows light outside. Then, after time, the sun sets, and it grows dark again. This pattern of light and dark over time is how we measure night and day.

## Astronomers Noticed Patterns

Throughout history, astronomers have noticed many other patterns. They saw that the moon goes through a pattern of phases in the sky over a period of time. This pattern became how months are measured. Some early astronomers also measured years by the pattern of the seasons on Earth. We are like early astronomers because we measure time by keeping track of patterns. But now we have a better understanding about why these patterns happen.

### Astronomers Noticed Patterns

Unit of Time	Early Observation
Day	a pattern of change from light to dark and dark to light in the sky
Month	the moon goes through a pattern of phases over time
Year	the seasons change in a pattern



## What Causes Night and Day?

Early astronomers knew that night and day happened over a period of time. Today we measure time in hours. We know that a day is 24 hours long. We also know why day and night happen. We know that night and day happen because Earth spins on an invisible axis. An **axis** is a real or imaginary line through the center of a spinning object.



This globe shows Earth's axis.

✓ **Comprehension**  
Summarize why a full day lasts 24 hours.

When one half of Earth turns toward the sun, it becomes daytime for that half. At the same time, the other half of Earth turns away from the sun and it is nighttime for that half. Because it takes Earth 24 hours to turn one time on its axis, one full day on Earth is 24 hours long.



Like this top, Earth spins on an axis.

