

The Plutoed Planet

Read each source below. Then complete the activities on pages 10–11.

Source 1

Tri-City Tribune

Child Names Planet Pluto

May 2, 1930

The astronomers of Lowell Observatory have voted, and it is official: our solar system's newest planet will be named Pluto. This name was first suggested by Venetia Burney, an 11-year-old schoolgirl from Oxford, England. A fan of mythology, Ms. Burney believed that the planet should be named after Pluto, the Roman god of the cold, dark underworld.

Pluto's journey from discovery to named planet has been quick. It was first observed on February 18 of this year by Clyde Tombaugh at Lowell Observatory in Arizona. On

March 24, a vote was held at Lowell Observatory to determine the planet's name. In addition to Pluto, the names Minerva and Cronus were also on the ballot. Yesterday, the results of the vote were announced, and they were unanimous. Every member chose Pluto for the planet's name.

Pluto now joins an exclusive club, as it becomes one of only nine planets in our solar system. Of these, Pluto is the farthest from the Sun. Astronomers believe that it is the coldest and smallest of the nine.

Source 2

Tri-City Tribune

Pluto Ousted!

September 14, 2006

Pluto has always been the little planet that was a little different than all the others. Yesterday, the International Astronomical Union (IAU) announced that Pluto will no longer be considered a planet. It will now be classified as a minor planet.

After a vote yesterday, the IAU has officially defined what it means to be a planet in our solar system, and Pluto does not meet all of the criteria. This decision is unpopular with some

astronomers, while others believe Pluto should have been stripped of its planet status long ago.

In 1930, Pluto was named the ninth planet in our solar system, despite the fact that it is much smaller than the other eight planets, and its orbit around the Sun follows a different path. With yesterday's ruling, Pluto now becomes just one of the nearly 400,000 minor planets that have been discovered.

Source 3

Tri-City Tribune

And the Winner Is . . .

January 6, 2007

2006 was a rough year for the former planet Pluto, but 2007 is starting off much better. Yesterday, the American Dialect Society announced its Word of the Year for 2006, and the honor goes to *plutoed*. This newly created verb means "devalued" or "demoted," and it

describes what happened to Pluto when the International Astronomical Union (IAU) decided last year that Pluto no longer met its definition of a planet. By winning this year's award, Pluto finally has something that no one can ever take away.

The Plutoed Planet *(cont.)*

Name: _____

Part 1: Read each idea. Which source gives you this information? Fill in the correct bubble for each source. (Note: More than one bubble may be filled in for each idea.)

Information	Sources →	1	2	3
		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1. Pluto was named a planet in 1930.		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Pluto was named a minor planet in 2006.		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. <i>Plutoed</i> won Word of the Year in 2006.		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. The IAU voted to change Pluto's planetary status.		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Part 2: Fill in the bubble next to the best answer to each question.

5. Earth is a planet. At this time, how many **other** planets are there in our solar system?
 (A) 7 (B) 8 (C) 9 (D) 10
6. If 100 people were asked to vote on the name Pluto, a unanimous vote would mean that
 (A) at least 50 voted in favor of the name.
 (B) more than 50 voted in favor of the name.
 (C) at least 90 voted in favor of the name.
 (D) all 100 voted in favor of the name.
7. Which word best describes the tone of the article in Source 3?
 (A) serious (C) mean-spirited
 (B) light-hearted (D) confused
8. Based on how the term is used in Source 1, which of these could be said to belong to an “exclusive club”?
 (A) the stars in the sky
 (B) the number of minor planets in our solar system
 (C) the voting members at Lowell Observatory
 (D) the number of people who have read a newspaper

Part 3: Search “The Plutoed Planet” to find one example of each of the following. Then write the number of the source in which you located this information.

9. a synonym for “removed” _____ Source #: _____

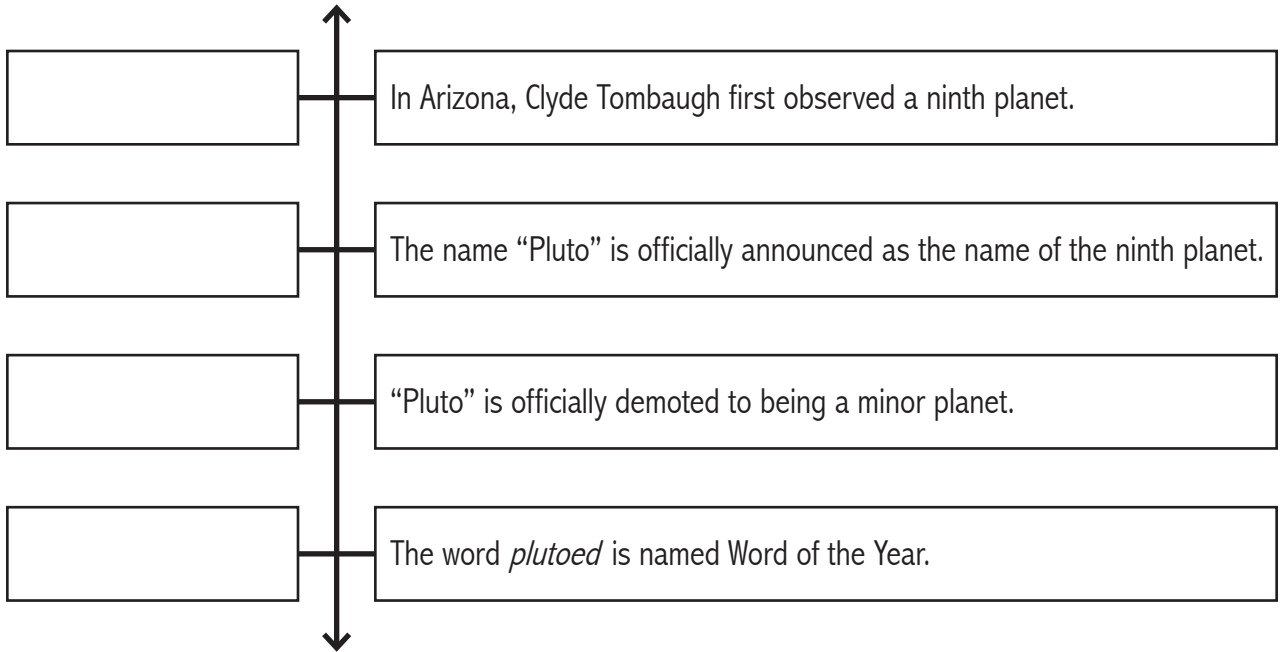
10. a synonym for “route” or “trip” _____ Source #: _____

The Plutoed Planet *(cont.)*

Name: _____

Part 4: Refer back to the sources, and use complete sentences to answer questions #12 and #13.

11. Add the exact dates (month, day, year) in the blank boxes to complete the timeline below.



12. In 1930, when it came time to name the newly discovered planet, why do you think Venetia Burney chose the name Pluto? Why did the astronomers think this was a good choice? Use information from the sources in your answer.

13. Venetia Burney (whose last name became Phair in 1947) lived until 2009. Was she alive when Pluto lost its status as a planet? Imagine being the one who named a planet when you were 11 years old. How would it feel to learn that it would no longer be considered a planet?

Answer Key

Unit 1. Kid in a Candy Store (page 6)

Part 1

- Paragraph 4
- Paragraph 2
- Paragraph 5
- Paragraph 3

Part 2

- B
- B
- A
- A

Part 3

The source number is given in parentheses.

- proceeds (1)
- connective (2)

Part 4

- This is figurative language because one could not literally turn closets upside down or inside out. What the narrator is literally doing is going through his/her house thoroughly to find clothing that can be donated for the contest.
- B. The scale would be needed because candy is sold at Sweet's Sweets by the pound. The cashier would need to weigh the candy to determine how much money the customer owed.
- Accept appropriate responses that follow the instructions and incorporate at least three similes into the paragraph.

Unit 2. The Plutoed Planet (page 9)

Part 1

- Sources 1 and 2
- Source 2
- Source 3
- Sources 2 and 3

Part 2

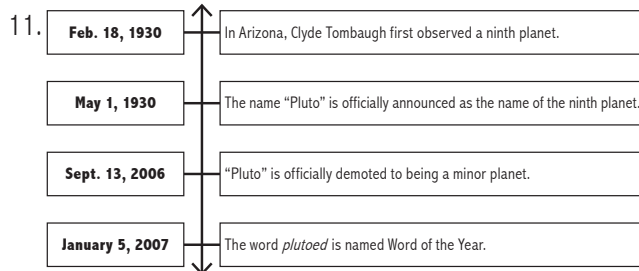
- A
- D
- B
- C

Part 3

The source number is given in parentheses.

- ousted (2), stripped (2)
- journey (1), path (2)

Part 4



- Students should mention that Pluto was the name of the god of the cold, dark underworld of mythology. This is appropriate because Pluto would be cold and dark, as it was considered to be the farthest planet from the Sun.
- Yes, she was alive, as she died in 2009 and Pluto was demoted in 2006. Accept appropriate responses about how students would feel to hear the news of a planet's demotion.

Unit 3. Starting at the Source (page 12)

Part 1

- Source 3
- Source 1
- Sources 1 and 4
- Source 4

Part 2

- B and C
- D
- B
- D

Part 3

The source number is given in parentheses.

- abbreviations (3), exaggeration (4)
- Minneapolis (1), Louisiana (2, 4)

Part 4

- Two answers should be circled: "6 years, 1 month" and "73 months." Students should explain that the abbreviation "NB" was first used in October of 1963 and then changed to "NE" in November of 1969. This was a period of time of 6 years and 1 month. Converted to months, this equals a period of 73 months.
- Accept appropriate responses.
- In pen, students should do the following: write "MN" and "source" on Minnesota, write "NE" on Nebraska, and write "mouth" on Louisiana. In pencil, they should shade in the following states: Michigan, Florida, Wisconsin, Louisiana, California, New York, Texas, Minnesota, and North Carolina. Below the map, students should write, "The place where a river begins is called its source, and the place where it ends is called its mouth."

Unit 4. The To-Do List (page 16)

Part 1

- Source 1
- Sources 1 and 2
- Sources 1 and 3
- Source 3

Part 2

- B
- C
- A
- B

Part 3

The source number is given in parentheses.

- sleeping like a baby (1)
- morning's (1), sister's (1)

Part 4

- 40
 - You need to know how much a quarter is worth (25¢) in order to determine the number of quarters needed to make \$10.
- \$50
 - From Source 1, we learn that his mother gave him \$60 total. From Source 2, we learn that he spent \$9.68 on supplies. That leaves him with a total of \$50.32. Rounded to the nearest whole dollar, that amount is \$50.
 - There are a few possible answers. Students should give an answer that satisfies the requirements set forth by the mother in Source 1. For example, \$1 bills (15), \$5 bills (3), \$10 bills (1), quarters (1 roll).
 - Students should explain that, per the mother's instructions, Jay should get many \$1 bills, a few \$5 bills, a \$10 bill, and one roll of quarters.