

Mercury

Mercury is the planet closest to the sun. It is about the same size as Earth's moon and is covered with craters where meteorites and asteroids have crashed into it.

Mercury is the fastest-orbiting planet in our solar system. Mercury is appropriately named after the Roman god, Mercury. As the messenger of the gods, Mercury is depicted as wearing winged sandals and travelling very fast.

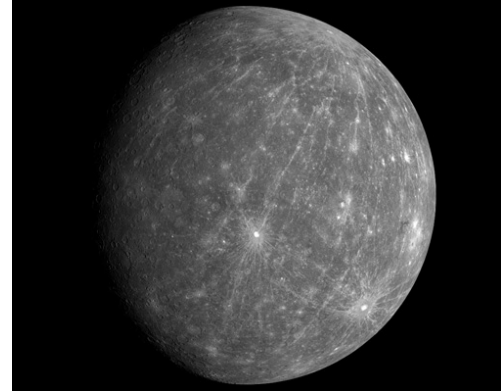


Image courtesy of <http://solarsystem.nasa.gov>

People would not be able to live on Mercury. There is no water on Mercury and it has a very thin atmosphere called an exosphere. Temperatures on Mercury's surface range from 870 degrees Fahrenheit to -297 degrees Fahrenheit. The temperature on Mercury can change as much as 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit from day to night!

After reading the information above, fold your paper on the line and try to answer the questions below without referring back to the data. (Check the box with the correct answer.)

- Mercury was named after a _____ god.
 Greek Roman Egyptian
- Mercury is the planet that is _____ the sun.
 farthest from most like closest to
- The temperature on Mercury can change as much as _____ degrees Fahrenheit from day to night.
 870 1,000 297
- Mercury is covered with _____?
 craters water sunscreen
- Mercury has a thin atmosphere called an _____.
 biosphere hemisphere exosphere

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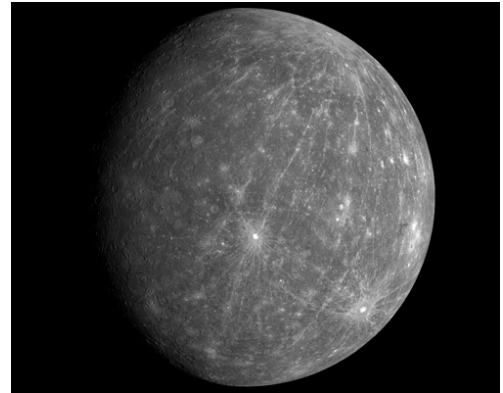


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