

Sheet 5A**✚ ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE UNIVERSE!** *(abridged and adapted version)*

Once upon a time, a long, long, long time ago, there was nothing. No animals, no people, no Earth, no planets, no Sun, no stars, no galaxies, no Universe, nothing at all. No space, no time, no matter. We must travel back in time about 14 billion years ago until this time. But, something happened. A **big explosion took place** in the middle of nowhere and from then on, things began to exist. This huge explosion, called the Big Bang, created an incredibly hot and dense Universe, smaller than an atom. In a fraction of a second, the Universe began to cool and **expand in every direction, everywhere**. The Universe, which is the space and everything that exists in it, including the Earth, solar systems and galaxies, began to be formed. Imagine for a moment a big box with a lot of things inside: the big box is the Universe and the things inside are the planets, the stars, the Sun, galaxies, everything.

After the Big Bang took place, **galaxies, solar systems, planets, stars and lots of other bodies started to shape the Universe**. But the process was slow, really slow. **Galaxies were the first ones**: they began to form one or two billion years after the Big Bang, the most famous one being the Milky Way, which contains about 200 billion stars and which is the place where our planet is.

In one of the big arms of our home galaxy, **the Solar System began to exist and form. Lots and lots and lots of stars, hundreds, thousands, billions of stars were going round and round the Solar System**. And in the middle...the **Sun!** At the very centre of our Solar System the Sun took his place and stayed. This huge yellow star, which contains 750 times more matter than all the other bodies in the Solar System put together, is the star by means of which we can see during the day. All the light we have on Earth is because of the Sun. But, the Sun is not the only important body in the Solar System. **Eight different planets were close to the Sun and altogether, the nine of them**

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plus lots of other small stars, formed the Solar System.

The third planet from the Sun was the **Earth**, the one we live on. It is called the blue planet because most of its surface is blue. The Earth felt very sad because it was alone. So, he decided to get a friend: the **Moon**. Other planets have got plenty of moons, but the Earth was happy with just one. The **four rocky planets closer to the Sun were hot**, extremely hot; they are Mercury, Venus, Earth and Mars. On the other hand, the **four giant gas planets farther away from the Sun were cold**, really, really cold, almost frozen; they are Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune.

And then, in the Universe, in the Milky Way, in the Solar System, billions of smaller bodies such as **asteroids and comets began to travel in the space**. They didn't like to be quiet in just one place, so they moved around and around with no place to go.