



NEAL PORTER BOOKS · 9780823446230 · Ages 4–8

## YOUR PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE

by Jason Chin

### ABOUT THE BOOK

With crisp illustrations and intriguing science, *Your Place in the Universe* introduces readers to the mind-boggling scale of the known universe. Jason Chin, the award-winning author and illustrator of *Grand Canyon*, has once again found a way to make a complex subject (size, scale, and almost unimaginable distance) accessible and understandable to readers of all ages.

### Next Generation Science Standards:

4–PS3: Energy, 4–PS4: Waves and Their Applications in Technologies for Information Transfer, 4–ESS1: Earth’s Place in the Universe, 4–ESS2: Earth’s Systems, 4–ESS3: Earth and Human Activity, 3–5–ETS1: Engineering Design

**Guided Reading Level: S**

**Grade Level Equivalent: 4**

### BEFORE READING

#### Essential Questions: Building Background Knowledge

1. What is the universe?
2. Where is our place in the universe? Where do we fit in?
3. How can we learn about the universe?
4. What are *size*, *scale*, and *distance*?
5. How do the components of our solar system move and interact with one another?
6. How does Earth’s atmosphere impact life on our planet?
7. How does space exploration help humans to solve problems on Earth?
8. How do we know that the universe is continuously evolving and expanding?
9. How has technology aided us in our study of the universe?

### DURING READING

Consider these questions:

- What is the author’s purpose? What does the author want to answer, explain, or describe? Include examples from the book to support your argument.
- Describe the structure of the book. How does the presentation of information in *Your Place in the Universe* contribute to your understanding of the content?
- What is the observable universe? How is the idea of the universe introduced? Support your answer with evidence from the text.
- Why is chronology, or the order of events, important to this book? How do the events in the beginning of the book relate to the theme?



- How does the author use comparison to expand your understanding? Which cause-and-effect relationships are important in the book?
- What are the central ideas or themes in the book? Explain the important details from the book that relate to the main idea or themes. Describe the main elements of the text. How do they add up to form the text's message? Summarize the book in your own words.
- How does the setting change in the book? Describe how the setting relates to the theme and main idea of the book.
- How do the themes work together? Give details to support your argument. What lesson does the author want readers to learn?
- Give examples of how the author uses reason and evidence to support points in the book.

### Word Work

Which words does the author use in the book to describe:

- Comparisons
- Units of measurement
- Technology
- Math
- Science

### Text Features & Illustration Story

- What features in the book help you navigate or better understand information?
- Why does the creator include side text at the bottom of each page? What specific information does it give the reader?
- What is the purpose of the diagrams? Provide a specific example of how a reader would use a diagram to get information.
- Why are size, scale, and distance important to the illustrations in the book? Explain how the illustrations enhance meaning.

## AFTER READING

### Research & Activities

- What was the most amazing thing you learned from reading *Your Place in the Universe*? Research this topic further and create a PowerPoint presentation to share with the class.
- Write a poem inspired by the following quote by author Jason Chin: "Thinking about the size of the universe often makes me feel small."
- Create a timeline of events in the story beginning with the children. Show the sequence of events as it pertains to comparison, beginning with the smallest object and ending with the largest.
- Create a piece of art that reflects the message that humankind is the only species that understands the vastness of space. We can understand our special place in the universe, and although we are small, we are not insignificant.
- Make a scale model of the solar system. The following website could be helpful getting you started: [exploratorium.edu/ronh/solar\\_system/](http://exploratorium.edu/ronh/solar_system/)

Guide written by Marla Conn, MS, Ed., reading/literacy specialist and educational consultant.

