Activity 21: Planet Project

The distance from the Sun and the average temperature on the surface of the nine planets are given in the table below.

Name of Planet	Distance from the Sun (million km)	Average surface Temperature (°C)
Mercury	58	350
Venus	108	460
Earth	150	20
Mars	228	- 23
Jupiter	778	- 120
Saturn	1,429	- 180
Uranus	2,871	- 210
Neptune	4,504	- 220
Pluto	5,913	- 230

1 Plot a graph of Distance from the Sun (on the x-axis) against the Average temperature (on the y-axis).

a What do you conclude from this graph?

b What is the explanation for the different temperatures on the planets?

c The temperature on the planet Venus does not follow the general rule. Read about the "Greenhouse Effect" and explain why its temperature is so much higher than expected.

2 Choose one planet and imagine you have recently been on a visit there. Use all the information you have so far and the fact sheet on that planet (better still, use the NASA database on the Internet for both text and pictures) to write a report on conditions on the planet. You could include:-

Atmosphere, temperature, wind and weather.

Appearance of the surface.

Length of day and year.

The moons of the planet.

Strength of gravity.

Pictures of scenes and features on the planet.

Pictures of the moons and Solar System seen from the planet.