**Worksheet on Mercury**

**Word Bank**:

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| moving sunset Venus heat | Temperature  closest Sun atmosphere | Mercury surface axis sky | Moons  Pluto  Seasons | Sky  Atmosphere  Heat |  |

Mercury is the planet \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to the Sun in our Solar System and the fastest \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ planet in our Solar System. It is the second-hottest planet in our Solar System (only \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is hotter). Mercury is so close to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that from Earth, you can only see it near sunrise or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Mercury has no \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Mercury was named after Mercury, the mythical Roman winged messenger.

This small, rocky planet has almost no atmosphere. Since the atmosphere is so slight, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ would appear pitch black (except for the sun, stars, and other planets, when visible), even during the day. If you were on the surface of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, the Sun would look almost three times as big as it does from Earth! Also, there is no "greenhouse effect" on Mercury. When the Sun sets, the temperature drops very quickly since the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ does not help retain the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Mercury has a very elliptical orbit and a huge range in temperature. During the long daytime (which lasts 88 Earth days or an entire Mercurian year), the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is hotter than an oven; during the long night (the same length), the temperature is colder than a freezer.

Mercury is about 3,031 miles (4,878 km) in diameter. It is the smallest planet in our Solar System (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, now not considered to be a planet, is smaller). Mercury is only slightly larger than our moon. Mercury is a heavily cratered planet; its surface is similar to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the Earth's moon.

There are no seasons on Mercury. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are caused by the tilt of the axis relative to the planet's orbit. Since Mercury's \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is directly perpendicular to its motion (it is not tilted), it has no seasons.