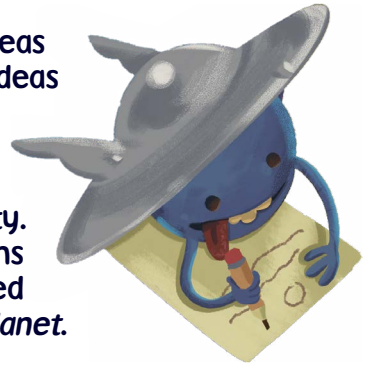


Readers respond in multiple ways including: making connections to themselves, their communities, and their literacy experiences; pursuing their curiosity through discussion, inquiry, and self-expression; and changing their attitudes and behaviors. This guide provides suggestions and resources for supporting and extending students' authentic reading responses. Select activities and resources that best meet the needs and interests of your students.

READ AND DISCUSS

Read *XO, Exoplanet* aloud and discuss the book with students. What information or ideas stood out? What questions do students have? Collect and organize their questions and ideas on chart paper or an online platform like Flipgrid, and/or invite students to record their thinking in their notebooks. Where can students go to answer their questions or learn more? Generate a list of general resources students might use for inquiry such as websites, other books, school library databases, and people in your community. Students can add specific resources under these categories later. Students' questions and a list of accessible resources provide a foundation for deeper inquiry and focused discussion. This guide includes several resources for reading and discussing *XO, Exoplanet*.



PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

1. Invite students to think about moments in their lives when they disagreed with another person. Have them think about it. How did they feel? How do they think the other person felt? Why did they both feel this way? How was this conflict resolved? What would they change about this event if they could go back? In their notebooks, students can write their memories of this event from both perspectives. Ask students to share their narratives with a partner and reflect on what they can learn about taking the perspective of another person. Model and set expectations for inclusivity and acceptance of all students—recognizing that many young people can feel uncomfortable sharing opinions, preferences, or experiences that reveal differences. Encourage interest and respect for each other.

2. Invite students to think about moments in their lives when they felt they were misunderstood or their feelings were not considered. How did they feel? Why did they feel this way? Were they able to express their feelings and be heard? Why or why not? What would they change about this event if they could go back? Emphasize to kids that their feelings should be heard, but that other people have feelings that must be considered too. Students can write about their memories of this event in their notebooks and share this experience with a writing/discussion partner as appropriate.



3. Books or parts of books written in epistolary style include letters, text messages, or other documents in the text. *XO, Exoplanet* includes an exchange of letters between the planets in our solar system and the planets of another system. Teach children the basic form for a friendly letter and exchange letters with another class in your building, pen pals, or seniors in your local community. Several resources for letter writing activities are included in the additional resources section for this guide.



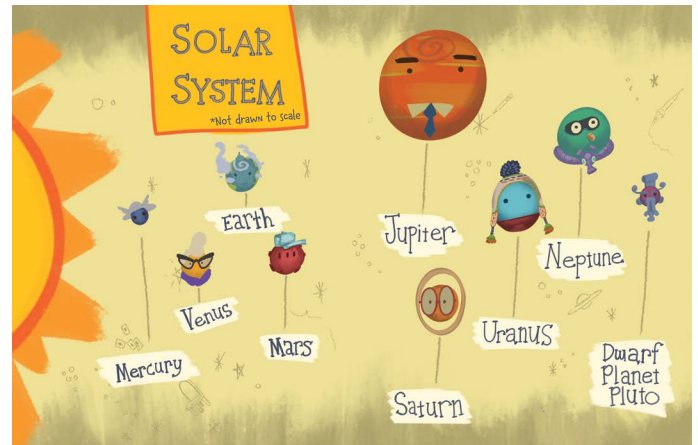
4. Perspective taking is the ability to relate to other people and see things from their point of view. It's a vital interpersonal skill necessary for positive and inclusive communication and relationships. Perspective taking is often seen as the cognitive part of empathy (Davis, 1983). In order to develop perspective taking, children must understand that thoughts exist and there are different perspectives involved—theirs and other's. You can practice perspective taking with students through regular conversation and writing during read alouds and book club discussions. Provide texts and media showing different perspectives on the same topic such as an environmental or social issues relevant to your students. Invite students to consider not only their perspective on the issue, but the perspectives of others who may disagree with them. Ask students to consider:



- What is life like for this person (or character)?
- What might be influencing how they perceive this situation that I can't see?
- How can I relate to their experience to understand how they feel?

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

5. The author and illustrator of this text incorporated nonfiction information and text elements such as facts about our solar system, planets, and exoplanets. Invite students to look through their writing notebook entries and find one story or poem they would like to elaborate with factual information or detail, such as interesting facts about a setting or event, more specific words for nouns, or illustrations or text features that show information like diagrams or charts. Students may conduct research or add their background knowledge of events, locations, and people to include more detail. Invite students to collect examples of informational details and facts from fictional and narrative texts and other media. Students can share these found examples during writing groups or online platforms like Padlet or Google Classroom.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

6. Work with students to identify issues in your community that involve stakeholders with differing viewpoints such as the need for a new school or road in your area. Invite local government officials or community members to speak with your class via Zoom. Focus on how community leaders consider differing perspectives when making decisions about what's best for the community as a whole. How are different perspectives considered? How are community members included in decision-making?





7. Learning for Justice offers several lesson plans and activities for teaching students about empathy and perspective taking:

1. “What Is Empathy?” is an opening activity for kindergarten through second grade kids that builds a foundation for future lessons and conversation: <https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/lessons/what-is-empathy>.
2. “Understanding Empathy” is a foundational lesson geared to third through fifth grade kids: <https://www.learningforjustice.org/classroom-resources/lessons/understanding-empathy>

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Dishon, G., & Kafai, Y. B. \(2020\). Making more of games: Cultivating perspective-taking through game design. Computers & Education, 148](#)

[Exoplanet Exploration \(NASA\)](#)

[Who’s got Mail? Using Literature to Promote Authentic Letter Writing \(NCTE\)](#)

[Perspective Taking: The Social Skill You Want to be Teaching Kids](#)

[Reading Rockets: An Introduction to Letter Writing](#)

[What Is an Exoplanet? \(NASA Space Place\)](#)



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