Name:_____

Passage 1: The Inner Planets

The inner planets in our solar system are close to the Sun. There are four of them: Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars. These planets are small and rocky, and they have hard surfaces. Earth is the only one where living things, like plants and animals, can live. Mercury is the smallest planet, and it gets very hot during the day and very cold at night. Venus is covered with thick clouds, making it one of the hottest planets. Mars is the “Red Planet” because it has a lot of iron in its soil, giving it a reddish color. The inner planets are much smaller than the outer planets, and they all orbit the Sun in almost perfect circles.

Passage 2: The Outer Planets

The outer planets are much farther from the Sun than the inner planets. These planets are Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune. Unlike the rocky inner planets, the outer planets are much larger and mostly made of gas. They do not have hard surfaces, and they are called "gas giants." Jupiter is the largest planet in the solar system, and it has a big storm called the Great Red Spot. Saturn has beautiful rings made of ice and rock. Uranus and Neptune are much colder than the inner planets. These planets also orbit the Sun, but they do so in bigger, more oval-shaped paths than the inner planets. Even though the outer planets are very different from the inner planets, they all move in the same direction around the Sun.

Multiple Choice Questions:

1. What are the inner planets made of?
   A) Ice and gas
   B) Rock and metal
   C) Water and air
   D) Gas and dust
2. Which planet is known for having rings?
   A) Jupiter
   B) Venus
   C) Saturn
   D) Mars
3. How are the inner planets and outer planets similar?
   A) They are both made of ice
   B) They both have moons
   C) They both orbit the Sun
   D) They both have rings
4. Which group of planets is larger?
   A) The inner planets
   B) The outer planets
   C) They are the same size
   D) The inner planets are bigger

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Short Response Question:

5. Compare and contrast the inner and outer planets. How are they different, and how are they the same?

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