

Pre/Post Comet Quiz



Student Information:

Please complete this comet quiz.

1. What are comets often called?
 - a. Dirty snowballs
 - b. Silly streakers
 - c. Glorious dirt balls
 - d. Pretty Dusters

2. How big are the nuclei of most comets?
 - a. 5 miles (8 km) or less
 - b. 20 miles (32 km)
 - c. 100 miles (161 km) or more
 - d. 1,500 miles (2,414 km)

3. What is the coma of a comet?
 - a. The drowsiest part of a comet
 - b. A cloud of gas surrounding the nucleus
 - c. A light sprinkling of dusk on the nucleus
 - d. The very top of the comet

4. How many tails does a comet have?
 - a. Comets don't have tails
 - b. One, an ion tail
 - c. Two, an ion tail and a dust tail
 - d. Comets have hundreds of tiny tails

5. Which way do the tail or tails of a comet point?
 - a. Away from the sun
 - b. Toward the sun
 - c. At Earth
 - d. Comets don't have tails

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6. Which comet smashed into Jupiter in 1994?

- a. Hale-Bopp
- b. Shoemaker-Levy 9
- c. Halley's Comet
- d. President Lincoln's Comet

7. True or False: Some scientists think that water and organic materials carried by comets may have seeded life on Earth.

- True
- False

8. Where do many comets come from?

- a. The Moon
- b. Mercury
- c. The Oort Cloud
- d. Stars

9. What are comets believed to be made of?

- a. Hydrogen gas
- b. Only ice
- c. Only rock
- d. Mixture of ice, rock, and dust

10. A long period comet is a comet with a period of 200 years or more.

- True
- False

11. What is the most prominent part of a naked eye comet to the unaided eye?

- a. Ion tail
- b. Coma
- c. Dust tail
- d. Nucleus

12. What did the ancient Greeks call comets?

- a. Angels
- b. Fast moving planets
- c. Hairy stars
- d. Falling stars

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13. In the twentieth century, most comets were named using which convention?
- a. After their discoverer
 - b. Alphabetically
 - c. After the nearest galaxy
 - d. After ancient gods
14. What comet has the shortest known orbital period?
- a. Comet Halley
 - b. Comet Encke
 - c. Comet Schwassmann-Wachmann 1
 - d. Comet Borrelly
15. The solid body of the comet is called the _____.
- a. tail
 - b. coma
 - c. amoeba
 - d. nucleus

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Answer Key

1. A
2. D
3. B
4. C
5. A
6. B
7. TRUE
8. C
9. D
10. TRUE
11. C
12. C
13. A
14. B
15. D