

ISP 205
Review Questions, Week 9

This is not required homework. It will not be graded. Answers will be supplied next week.

1. From the Friday before Spring break How was the planet Neptune discovered? What does this have to do with how Pluto was discovered and why Pluto was originally classified as a planet?
2. How do we now know that Pluto is in fact a very small object? What are the similarities between Pluto and other Kuiper Belt comets? (And by the way, what is the Kuiper Belt?)
3. Turning to this week's lectures: Exoplanets (extrasolar planets) are planets orbiting stars other than the Sun. What technique has been used to find most of the exoplanets discovered so far? What is the basic idea behind that technique?
4. Why can't the above technique find terrestrial planets in the habitable zone?
5. What technique is being used by the Kepler spacecraft in its search for terrestrial planets?
6. Why are we so especially interested in finding terrestrial planets in the habitable zone?
7. Regarding the Sun: What is the photosphere? The chromosphere? The corona?
8. What causes sunspots?
9. What is the "sunspot cycle"?