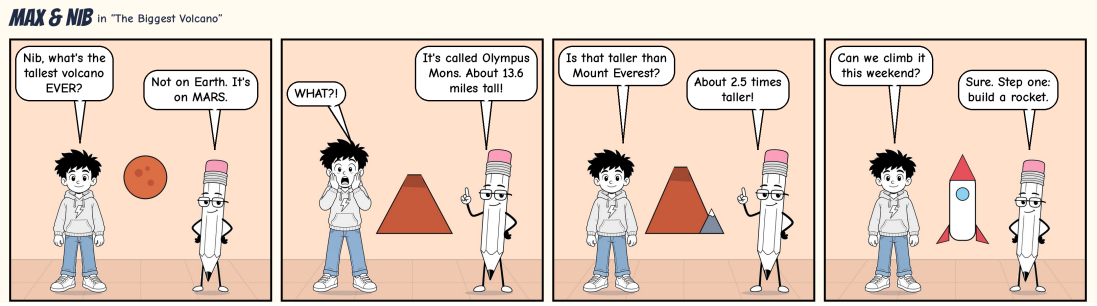


Name: _____ Date: _____

The Tallest Volcano Isn’t on Earth!

Space / Earth Science · Grades 3–6 · About 15 minutes · Max & Nib

Cool facts

What is the tallest volcano in the whole solar system? It is not on Earth. It is on Mars! It is called Olympus Mons (say: oh-LIM-pus MONS). NASA says it is about 13.6 miles tall. That is about 2.5 times as tall as Mount Everest, the highest mountain on Earth above sea level (about 5.5 miles). Olympus Mons is a shield volcano. That means it is very wide, with gentle slopes, like the volcanoes in Hawaii — just much, much bigger. Scientists measure it in slightly different ways, so you may see other numbers, like about 16 miles. Either way, it is HUGE. And don't worry: NASA says it is dormant, which means it is not erupting today.

Questions

1. On which planet is Olympus Mons?

2. About how tall is Olympus Mons, according to NASA?

3. About how many times taller is Olympus Mons than Mount Everest?

4. Look at the comic. What does Nib say is “step one” for climbing it?

Write about it

Imagine you are the first person to stand on top of Olympus Mons. What do you see? What do you pack for the trip?

The Tallest Volcano Isn't on Earth! — Answer Key

Grades 3–6 · For teacher or parent use

Answers

1. On which planet is Olympus Mons?
   Mars.
2. About how tall is Olympus Mons, according to NASA?
   About 13.6 miles (about 72,000 feet). Also accept "about 14 miles" or "about 16 miles."
3. About how many times taller is Olympus Mons than Mount Everest?
   About 2.5 times taller.
4. Look at the comic. What does Nib say is "step one" for climbing it?
   Build a rocket.

Writing prompt: Imagine you are the first person to stand on top of Olympus Mons. What do you see? What do you pack for the trip?
Accept any creative answer for the writing prompt. Heights differ by how they are measured (Mars has no sea level): NASA lists about 13.6 miles / 21.9 km in one source and about 16 miles / 25 km measured from the plains in another. Everest is 29,032 feet (about 5.5 miles) above sea level.

Sources

- NASA Science: Olympus Mons (THEMIS image) — https://science.nasa.gov/photojournal/pj-olympus-mons-26/
- NASA Science: Mars Near Opposition 2024 (Hubble) — https://science.nasa.gov/asset/hubble/mars-near-opposition-2024/
- NASA: How Big Is It? (Moon to Mars educator guide) — https://www.nasa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/how_big_is_it_web_040920_hires.pdf