

Knit Kit 9 - Pluto's Heart



Image Credit: NASA/JHUAPL/SwRI

Cold hearts need love too.

The Story

When the planet was discovered in 1930, there was a big deal made of naming the new-found (then) planet. Planets in our Solar System are all named after the gods of ancient Rome. The new planet needed a Roman god's name too. Percival Lowell, the astronomer who found Pluto, heard suggestions from Atlas to Zeus, he even turned down his own wife's suggestions.

An 11-year old girl in Oxford suggested the name Pluto. Lowell liked it, partly because the first two letters (PL) were his initials. In Roman myth, Pluto was the king of the underworld, and his personality was said to be cold and distant, just like this cold, distant planet.

I like this story, because it shows that every person has access to change the landscape of science. There is plenty of room for personality, humanity and character in space science!

The Science

Pluto was discovered in 1930. It's so small and far away that we had to know exactly where to look before we could find it. If you unfolded Pluto's surface into a flat map, it would be smaller than Russia! In 2006, we stopped calling it a planet (like the Earth, or Mars) and changed it to a dwarf planet. Dwarf planets are like small planets, round rocky things in

space, except way smaller than planets. They are usually found within asteroid belts, unlike full-size planets.

In 2018, the New Horizons probe flew by Pluto, and snapped some great pics - the most detailed we've ever seen. The heart shape that you can see on Pluto is actually split into two areas. The left is an ice sheet about four times bigger than Edinburgh. The right hand side is all icy mountains

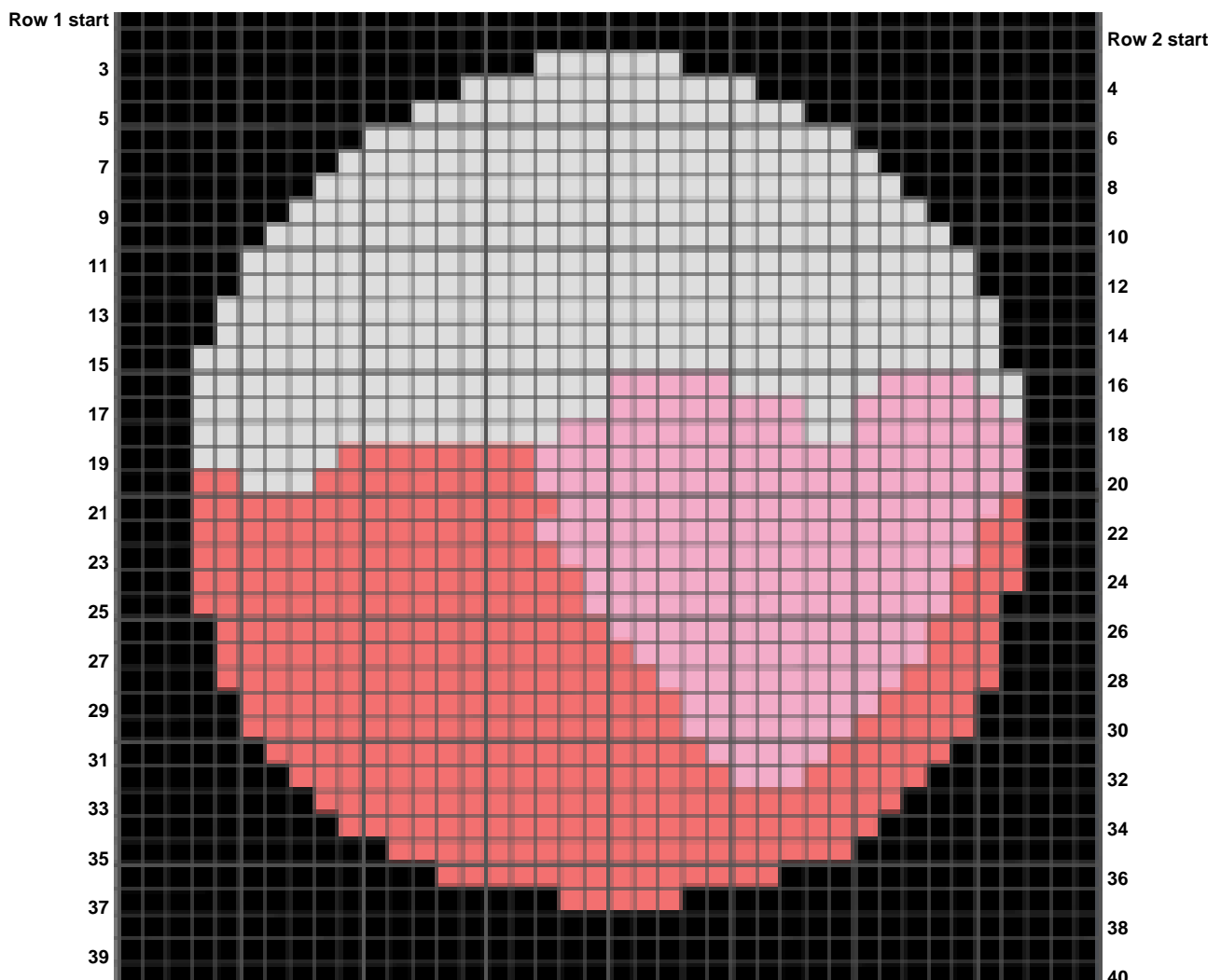
This is an easy knit. You will need:

- 4 colours of wool - we used black, white, cream and pink.
- A pair of knitting needles

And that's it!

You don't have to use the colours that we used - just use whatever you or your family have lying around. In this knit, we used around 25g of black, and 10g of white, cream and pink, and knitted on 4mm knitting needles.

Skills used include: Cast On, Knit, Purl, Change Colour (fair isle), and Cast Off. Go to our website www.knittheuniverse.co.uk for links to handy YouTube videos to learn these skills. Remember: After casting on, knit odd-numbered rows, changing colours as you go, and purl even numbered rows, changing colours as you go.



Knitting Pattern

K – Knit P – Purl b – Black w - White r –Red p – Pink

For example, P5p means purl 5 stitches in pink.

Cast on 40 stitches in black (or an alternate colour).

Row 1-2: Knit one row, purl one row

Row 3: K17b, K6w, K17b

Row 4: P14b, P12w, P14b

Row 5: K12b, K16w, K12b

Row 6: P10b, P20w, P10b

Row 7: K9b, K22w, K9b

Row 8: P8b, P24w, P8b

Row 9: K7b, K26w, K7b

Row 10: P6b, P28w, P6b

Row 11: K5b, K30w, K5b

Row 12: P5b, P30w, P5b

Row 13: K4b, K32w, K4b

Row 14: P4b, P32w, P4b

Row 15: K3b, K33w, K4b

Row 16: P3b, P2w, P4p, P6w, P5p, P17w, P3b

Row 17: K3b, K17w, K8p, K2w, K6p, K1w, K3b

Row 18: P3b, P7p, P2w, P10p, P15w, P3b

Row 19: K3b, K6w, K8r, K20p, K3b

Row 20: P3b, P20p, P9r, P3w, P2r, P3b

Row 21: K3b, K15r, K18p, K1r, K3b

Row 22: P3b, P2r, P18p, P14r, P3b

Row 23: K3b, K15r, K17p, K2r, K3b

Row 24: P3b, P3r, P15p, P16r, P3b

Row 25: K3b, K16r, K15p, K2r, K4b

Row 26: P4b, P3r, P13p, P16r, P4b

Row 27: K4b, K17r, K12p, K3r, K4b

Row 28: P4b, P4r, P10p, P18r, P4b

Row 29: K5b, K18r, K8p, K4r, K5b

Row 30: P5b, P5r, P7p, P18r, P5b

Row 31: K6b, K18r, K5p, K5r, K6b

Row 32: P7b, P5r, P3p, P18r, P7b

Row 33: K8b, K24r, K8b

Row 34: P9b, P22r, P9b

Row 35: K11b, K19r, K10b

Row 36: P13b, P14r, P13b

Row 37: K18b, K5r, K17b

Row 38 – 40: Using black, purl even rows, knit odd rows

Cast off.