

Instrument: I didn't so much choose one individual instrument, as a group of instruments. I guess I don't know exactly what they are called, but I was looking at the various models of the solar system. There were several on one of the front cases: one with the sun and planets from Mercury to Saturn (and moons that had been discovered), one was a moon-Earth system, and one was showing a comet trajectory. These were fascinating (I liked that, in the whole solar system model, the earth was much larger proportionally than it is in actuality) but it was disappointing because I couldn't look at them more closely or play with them. These were also completely enclosed, so I couldn't see any of the mechanisms. I also looked at the much much larger model right in the entrance. This one was beautiful, not only because of its presentation and adornments, but also because I was actually able to see the gears and mechanisms that make it work! The woman working there also talked to Lea and I about it a little bit, and she told us that the man who made it (I forget his name right now) ignored the discovery of Uranus, because it was discovered several years after he began making it (it took ~15 years) and the size and mechanisms were already planned and he had begun building it, so there was no room to add Uranus! All the data on placards around the outside was also interesting. Everything was there from the standard size, year length, etc, to how long it would take each planet to crash into the sun.

Rare books: I love books. Absolutely and completely. And I especially love old books. The smell, the way they feel and look, they are so unique. And the library itself was incredible. I could have spent forever just looking through the titles of all of the books on the shelves. I was amazed we were able to touch and look at these books that are so incredibly old! And there are no words to describe how amazing it was to see, in Galileo's Motion book, a handwritten inscription from him. The fact that he himself touched and handled that exact copy is stunning. And I loved that in looking through all of these books, we all saw diagrams of things we ourselves had drawn and worked through. I only wish I could read Latin and Italian! I loved looking through all of these books, seeing this and having this rare experience.

Reading: I think its interesting that many of the ideas presented in these dialogue excerpts are correct generally at least in part, but sometimes have wrong assumptions or conclusions. Though I can't imagine being the first to come up with all of this. It must have been amazingly challenging to be the first to try and explain these phenomena. I also think it is interesting that Galileo uses only words to describe what he sees occurring. Considering he was a mathematician by training, I would have expected him to be more technical in his explanations and descriptions. Now this could have been a function of who he thought his audience was, or perhaps because it was early on in this work, or for some other reason. Regardless, I find this intriguing. And I thought the dialogue was a very cool way to present the material.

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