CLAIM

Reason 1 – Evidence

Reason 1 – Evidence

Reason 1 – Evidence

Counterclaim

Rebuttal

Stronger argument? Why or why not?

NO

Have You Lost Your Mind?

Going to Mars is an insane death wish.

Hi Alex,

Now I'm the one who can't sleep. I've been lying in bed, staring at the ceiling, wondering if my friend Alex has COMPLETELY LOST HER MIND. Did you see the "Risks and Challenges" page on the Mars One website? I quote: "Mars is an unforgiving environment where a small mistake or accident can result in large failure, injury, and death." Alex!!!!!!!

Look, I get why this **appeals** to you. Your sense of adventure is one of the things I love about you. But I don't believe you've thought this through. You're talking about moving to a planet with a completely different environment. On Mars, you die if you go outside without a spacesuit. Think about that.

Let's also take a moment to consider the trip there. It takes seven months to get to Mars. That's 210 days crammed into a tiny spaceship with three other people and nothing but moist towelettes to keep you clean. That alone would be enough to stop me, but I know: You can take it. You're tough.

Can you take **cosmic radiation**, though? According to an article I read, you'd be exposed to low levels of cosmic radiation, which is as scary as it sounds. It's a dangerous form of energy found in space that could damage your brain. I think it goes without saying that your brain is really important when you're on this "amazing adventure," as you put it.

I could go on about the dangers, but I'll stop, because I want to talk about the bigger picture here—the whole leaving-Earth-forever thing. You'd never hear birds sing or feel sand between your toes. You'd never breathe fresh air or go to a football game. Earth is your home, Alex. And if you really want to improve recycling and solar power and all that—you can do it from here.

I don't understand how you can so easily dismiss the difficulty of leaving your friends and family either. Do you know that there will be a time delay in sending and receiving messages? That means you'd never have a real-time conversation with your parents (or me) again. And while I read all about how careful Mars One is being in putting together groups of colonists who can work together . . . well, you've seen reality TV. My guess is that it won't take long before the colonists are **plotting** to kill each other.

It comforts me to know that, given the huge number of nutcases who want to go to Mars, the odds of your being chosen are slim. Still, please listen to my advice: Do. Not. Apply. Stay happy. Stay alive. Stay on Earth.

Your friend,

Mark

TOM GARRETT

SCAVENGER HUNT

Directions: Hunt through each letter for the following elements.

1. Underline the **central idea**, or **central claim**.
2. Put a star next to two pieces of **supporting evidence**.
3. Circle the **counterargument**.
4. Put a double star next to the writer's **rebuttal**.

YOU decide: Who made the stronger argument?

LIVEWORKSHEETS