

Reading activity

Read the text and match the sentences at the end of each paragraphs to complete the information.

LOOKING FOR A NEW EARTH

For thousands of years, humans explored the Earth. Now astronomers are exploring space, looking for new planets or a 'new Earth' for humans to live on in the future. But what will a new Earth look like?

First of all, astronomers look for a star. That's because our Earth orbits a star (the Sun). When astronomers have found a star, they look for planets around it. In recent years, astronomers have found thousands of new planets orbiting suns. Once they find a new planet, it's also important to measure the distance between the planet and the sun. That's because most planets (unlike our Earth) are either too near the star or too far away.

When they find a planet in a good position, astronomers look for three things: water, air and rock. Water is important because if humans go there, they will need water to drink and to grow plants. If we can grow plants, then the plants can produce air for humans to breathe. Finally, astronomers also look for rocks, because these are often under the rocks.

In recent years, astronomers have found a few planets that are very similar to Earth. For example, Gliese 581g is a planet at a safe distance from the nearest star. Astronomers also think it has water and rock. The average temperature is between -31°C and -12°C which is cold, but not colder than Antarctica on The Arctic Circle.

However, there are some differences. Gliese 581g is bigger than the Earth and a year on Gliese is only 37 Earth days instead of 365. And the biggest problem is the distance. Gliese 581g is 18 trillion kilometres from the Earth.

- a As a result, they are too hot and gassy or too cold and icy for human life.
- b With current space technology, humans will take 766,000 years to travel there.
- c And how do you find a 'new Earth'?
- d So even if we can't see water on a planet, it's sometimes there.
- e Humans can live in these temperatures.