Name_____

Men on Mars?

In our ongoing quest to explore the place in which we live, we have reached beyond Earth into outer space. First, people dreamed of traveling to the moon. That has been accomplished. Now, scientists at NASA are investigating what it would take to send people to Mars.

According to NASA, a primary concern with a Mars landing is astronaut safety. Mars lacks the ozone layer of Earth's atmosphere, increasing the amount of solar ultraviolet radiation that reaches the planet. Scientists also want to learn more about the chemical aspects of the Martian soil before exposing people to that environment. Also, more studies need to be conducted on the prolonged effects of low gravity on the human body. After spending several weeks in space on shuttles or the space station, some astronauts reported experiencing blurred vision. Finally, there is the question of the psychological effect of being so far from Earth for an extended period of time.

Currently, NASA plans to use robots to explore the Martian environment. Robots will analyze the radiation in the atmosphere and search for water resources. Before humans travel to the red planet, technology will need to be developed for descent and landing to keep the level and effect of g-forces safe for humans.

Why are agencies such as NASA putting time and money into research? In the past, the development of technology for the space program has had benefits here on Earth. Some areas include medicine, recycling, solar energy, and others.

News sources cite reports of people signing up to go to Mars, a multibillion-dollar venture. Why? Humans are, by nature, explorers, and the pull to the unknown is strong to the human spirit. Those who take a slightly more scientific approach would like to investigate possible life forms on Mars. They wonder what Mars can teach us about Earth.

Text Questions

1. Which of the following is <u>not</u> a concern for astronaut safety?
   a. ultraviolet radiation
   b. psychological effects
   c. low gravity
   d. improved vision

2. How would you describe the structure the author uses to organize the text?
   a. argumentative
   b. persuasive
   c. narrative
   d. informative

3. What is a synonym for the word *cite* as it is used in the last paragraph?
   a. commend
   b. mention
   c. summon
   d. rehearse

4. What is the main idea of the third paragraph?
   a. It explains the technology we will need to go to Mars.
   b. NASA will study Mars before sending a manned space flight.
   c. Space technology benefits people here on Earth.
   d. People like to explore the unknown.

5. What other issues can you think of that might be involved in sending manned space flights to Mars? Give reasons and examples to support your answer.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

Name_____

The Philippines

The nation of the Philippines is an archipelago. That means the nation is a group of islands. More than 7,000 islands make up the nation, but only about 2,000 are occupied. The capitol of the nation is Manila, on the island of Luzon. Manila has over 1.6 million people in the city—the most people per square mile than any other major city in the world. Almost 100 million people live in the Philippines.

During the 16th century, the Spanish landed and made Manila the capital of the Spanish West Indies. Since then, the Filipino people have fought for independence from various nations including Spain, Japan, and the United States. Today, the Filipinos have their own democracy under President Benigno Aquino III.

The Philippines is on the Pacific Ring of Fire and has many natural disasters. Every year, the nation has an average of between six and nine typhoons that hit land. The last major typhoon was Typhoon Yolanda, which was the strongest typhoon ever recorded on land. Many were killed or injured, and hundreds of thousands more people were displaced after high winds and floodwaters destroyed their homes. An average of twenty earthquakes also occur daily, although most are not felt.

Because of their varied past, the Philippines is a mix of East, West, Spanish, and Asian cultures. The two official languages of the Philippines are Filipino and English. Their colorful culture makes the Philippines a popular tourist destination.

Text Questions

1. According to the text, what type of land form is an *archipelago*?
   a. a mountain range
   b. a chain of islands
   c. a series of canyons
   d. a large glacier
2. Which natural disaster does the Philippines not experience?
   a. typhoons
   b. earthquakes
   c. floods
   d. tornadoes
3. According to the text, what is one reason the Philippines is a popular tourist destination?
   a. There are millions of people in the Philippines.
   b. Many countries have influenced the culture of the Philippines.
   c. Some of the islands are uninhabited.
   d. It is exciting to witness a typhoon.
4. What is the best way to define a *typhoon*?
   a. a violent tropical cyclone
   b. a snow storm
   c. a large wall of water
   d. a meteorite
5. How might the current democracy have an effect on the people and culture of the Philippines?

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

Name_____

United States Spy Agencies

Many people have heard of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The United States actually has 16 different spy agencies. It is a very complicated and complex group, and they report to different departments within the government.

The National Geospatial Intelligence Agency analyzes geospatial information. People working for this group look at images such as missile-launching sites. They study geography and terrain. Their research provides combat support for the Department of Defense.

Another agency assesses foreign nuclear weapons programs. It is called the Office of Intelligence and Counterintelligence. Intelligence is information that agencies collect, analyze, and distribute in response to government leaders' questions and requirements. This agency serves an important role in the intelligence community. It also provides scientific expertise, analysis, and technology.

The National Reconnaissance Office designs spy satellites for the government. Then they build and operate the satellites. They also gather satellite information.

Along similar lines, the National Security Agency provides "signals intelligence." This means they intercept signals between people or countries. They have the ability to break codes. Who, why, and how they are signaling are of vital importance. They are also responsible for the safe transmission of our own secret signaling.

With so many different intelligence agencies, it is difficult yet important that they all cooperate and share information with each other. The work they do can win or lose wars or even prevent wars from happening. Even in peacetime, their efforts protect citizens all around the world. Four separate agencies have been created just to ensure our network of spy and intelligence information flows smoothly between the various groups.

Text Questions

1. Which agency designs and manages spy satellites?
   a. National Geospatial Intelligence Agency
   b. Office of Intelligence and Counterintelligence
   c. National Reconnaissance Office
   d. National Security Agency

2. In which paragraph will you find the definition of *intelligence* as it is used in the text?
   a. the first paragraph
   b. the second paragraph
   c. the third paragraph
   d. the fifth paragraph

3. In what way are the different agencies expected to interact with one another?
   a. They need to cooperate and share information.
   b. They need details about what each agency is doing all the time.
   c. They need to compete to see which agency is doing the best job of protecting the United States.
   d. They need to present a united front to other countries.

4. What is the best meaning of the word *intercept* as it is used in this passage?
   a. to hinder
   b. to see or overhear
   c. to cut off between two points
   d. to seize or take

5. What is one of the main roles of the United States Intelligence agencies? Why is this important? Give reasons and evidence to support your answer.

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