



As you peered out of the window, you could see the red, dusty landscape which stretched out for miles. It looked barren and empty. This was Mars – the Red Planet.

You descended closer to the surface and could see the hundreds of craters and volcanoes that were dotted all around. Looking up past the horizon, you noticed two large white spheres which were the moons of Mars: Phobos and Deimos.

Neil Armstrong was explaining what was going to happen: “We’re going to have to sign off now as we won’t be able to maintain contact when you are on Mars. But once you land, you are looking for any signs of life. Water is a sure sign of life so *that’s* what you’re looking for.”

The intercom went silent as you sped closer to the planet.

**1** In the first paragraph there are four words that describe the surface of Mars. **Copy two** of them below.

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

**2** What would you be looking for once you landed and started to explore?

\_\_\_\_\_

**3** From the text above, match the word to the correct number of them.

Mars

two

volcanoes

one

moons of Mars

many



The on-board computer announced that your landing was imminent. You held on tightly as you bumped onto the surface of Mars. Once the craft had settled, it became eerily quiet – there was absolute silence.

You unclipped your safety harness and stood up. Moving to the side of the capsule, you put on your space suit; it was a time-consuming procedure but you needed to make sure you were dressed correctly: your life depended upon it.

Shuffling in your space suit, you made your way to the door of the spacecraft and patiently waited for the door to open. With a hiss, the panel slid to one side and there it was – Mars. You would be the first human to set foot on this planet.

You stepped out of the capsule and took a step onTO the red dust. You felt as light as a feather and had to concentrate really hard to walk; it took a great effort just to put one foot in front of another.

4

Below are some sentences that describe events from the above text. Number them 1 – 5 to show the order that they occurred in the text. The first one has been done for you.

You walked on the surface of the planet.

The spacecraft landed on Mars.

You left the spacecraft.

You put on the appropriate clothing.

The seat belt was loosened and removed .

5

Find and **copy a word** that means ‘about to happen very soon’.

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You started to relax and walk with more confidence and speed. Spying a ridge ahead, you decided to climb it to see what lay beyond. At the summit, you observed an enormous crater – this must have been the site of a meteorite collision.

Peering into the centre of the depression, you noticed a small, shiny object. Bounding over, you discovered that it was a small puddle of water – this was an incredible discovery. The presence of water meant that there may be life on this dry planet.

You remove the specially designed plastic bag from a pocket and carefully scooped up the water.

6 Which phrase in the text means ‘**very special occasion**’?

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7 Complete the table below with **one** piece of evidence from the text above to support each statement.

	Evidence
There has been a violent impact on the surface of Mars at some time in the past.	
The scientists who planned this mission had prepared to collect samples from the planet.	

8 How can you tell that finding the water was an important moment for science?

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