

THE FIRST WORDS FROM MARS WILL BE...

Objective

Upon completion of this activity, students will be able to:

- discuss Neil Armstrong's first words from the Moon
- develop a phrase they believe to be worthy of the first person on Mars.

Instructional Time

45 Minutes

Materials

Student Page

Thesaurus (optional)

Computers with word processing programs

Procedures

1. Distribute the student page and read it together.
2. As a class, discuss the meaning of Neil Armstrong's now famous phrase: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." It might be interesting to point out to the students that Armstrong had originally planned to say: "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind." How does leaving our "a" change the meaning of these famous words?
3. Next, students should generate ideas of what they would say if they were the first person to set foot on the surface of Mars.
4. Talk about words that are more or less interesting – a light in the sky is ho-hum but a sparkling flash seems much more interesting.
5. (Optional) Introduce and distribute the thesauri and demonstrate how they are used. If the students are using a word processing program, a thesaurus may be included.
6. Have students rewrite their phrases using a thesaurus.
7. Share results with the class.
8. Vote on a winner or work to combine phrases to come up with a single selection.

Student Name _____ Date _____

THE FIRST WORDS FROM MARS WILL BE...

When men first rocketed into space and landed on the moon, the whole world watched the event on television. Neil Armstrong climbed out of the Lander and placed the first human foot on the surface of the moon. This is what he said:

“That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”

These words have been repeated and quoted countless times since they were first broadcast from the moon in 1969. It was a great moment in history -- and because of television it was a moment in history that could be shared by almost everyone who was alive at the time. The words spoken at that important moment were carefully chosen.

DIRECTIONS: Complete the worksheet by following the steps written out below.

1. What did the words of Neil Armstrong mean?
2. What features of Neil Armstrong’s comment help make it easy to remember?

Imagine that it is the year 2019. You are chosen to be the first human being to step onto the planet Mars. Everyone on Earth will be watching and listening.

1. Write a few ideas here. Will you say something original or will you quote a famous person?
2. Look over your ideas. Choose three good phrases and write them below in your best handwriting.

Student Name _____ Date _____

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3. Choose two phases to rewrite. Have a friend read them. Use a thesaurus to help you to choose even better words.

4. Shorten your comments to no more than twelve words each. Your comment should express the importance of the event as well as the feelings you will have as a great explorer in a new land.

All right, it's time. NASA is interested in what you might say before they will even think about sending you to Mars, so it had better be good.

1. Choose your best comment and try to shorten it to ten powerful words.

2. Write this soon-to-be-famous phase below.