VOYAGE TO MARS

Time: One to two class periods
Grade Level: 3-8
Group Size: crew or individual
Vocabulary: analogous, residuals, reclusive, perspective, exponentially, sovereignty, dissension, melancholia

OVERVIEW

Would you risk everything (including your life) in order to get something you think you want...how powerful is the promise, the dream of something better...

In the first part of this activity, students will have an opportunity to explore their feelings about events that have occurred in their lives by discussing the given questions in a group.

In the second part, the futuristic scenario is used to link the past, present and future and should be discussed as a group.

TEACHER BACKGROUND

Students should be encouraged to use their imagination to further expand the scenario and more importantly, express what their hope is for the future and how it may be accomplished through present action. In this way, the student recognizes the past as a key to the future by providing “hindsight wisdom” which then becomes vital in creating goals and objectives for the future. After the discussion, give each student a copy of the advertisement. Ask them to write a short essay that answers the second set of questions. (We hope you might share with us some of your favorites.)

KEY CONCEPTS

- Students will link their own past experiences to those of the present and future.

MATERIALS

- Worksheet (see next page)

ADVANCED PREPARATION

- Copy enough worksheets for each group.
- Discuss the futuristic scenario as a class.

PROCEDURE

Please refer to attached worksheets which may be used as discussion or essay topics.
**INTRODUCTION**

In this modern world of convenience and high technology perhaps there are few occurrences in a student’s life that are analogous to the experience of immigrating to a foreign country aboard a sail-powered ship. When it only takes ten hours and 45 minutes to get from London to San Francisco, the trip seems like no big deal. Few portions of our planet are considered to be “new lands” and fewer still, if any, are the places that remain unaffected by the residuals of human existence. Whether they realize it or not, some students may have already experienced similar feelings to those of the emigrants 100 years ago. However, given a futuristic scenario in which they are able to put the emigrant’s voyage into a modern perspective, they may more fully appreciate the decisions that faced the emigrant in 1874.

Would you risk everything (including your life) in order to get something you think you want…
How powerful is the promise, the dream of something better…….

**Part One: The Questions**

Have you ever moved?
  - From where did you move and what was your final destination?
  - How were you and your belongings carried? (Moving van, U Haul…)
  - Did you get carsick?
  - Were there some belongings that you had to leave behind or get rid of?
  - Were there friends, family members or pets that you moved away from?

Why did you move?

Were you afraid to move?
  - What were you afraid of?
Did you like where you moved?
Was it what you expected?
Was it what you hoped for?

What is different about the places you have lived? (Climate, vegetation, weather…)
What is similar?

What do you miss the most about the places you have moved from?
What do like most about the places you have moved to?
Overall, were you glad you moved?
Part Two: The Future

The World in 2030

Every last bit of land has been bought by large corporations and leased to tenants for housing or manufacturing. Private ownership of property is no longer a possibility. High-rise buildings stretch skyward in order to utilize each square foot to the maximum. Great care and pride are exhibited in the maintenance of the Public Landscaped areas, which are manicured to perfection.

Advancements in computer technology, which have exploded exponentially, enable people to obtain all of life's necessities via modem. Becoming somewhat reclusive in their homes, most people have no use for the automobile. Concrete highways have been replaced by great underground systems of fiber-optic cables, which in turn, have given the atmosphere a chance to heal itself of carbon dioxide pollution. The simultaneous transmission of information and access to all data sources are responsible for many miraculous discoveries such as the ability to transform matter, making trash and garbage nonexistent. The sources of energy are from all natural renewable resources.

The creation of the Peace Pact in 2004 at the end of World War III abolished the sovereignty of nations and established the first United World Government. The world is at peace; however, there is some dissension among representatives as to how to best negotiate with hostile alien nations.

Environmentally speaking, the planet has slowly begun to heal through the continued efforts of new generations. The hole in the ozone layer was larger than at first predicted which has made it dangerous for people to remain in sunlight for more than five hours at a time. The polar ice caps have melted somewhat, raising the level of the oceans and further reducing the amount of available land. Large acreages of National Parks have been preserved and the rain forests have again flourished. (Currently, only authorized "keepers" have limited access to these areas to prevent overuse.)

It is a time of fragile stability. Although the mistakes of the past have been remedied with the advancement of MATPLEX, there remains uncertainty as to the level of irreversible damage sustained by the ecosystem. The general attitude of the populous remains one of hope, yet there is a melancholia that has settled upon many young people. Searching for a way of life only imagined in memorabilia, they dream of the past, not the future. Young people want what their parents had. The chance to own their own property, have a family, climb a mountain or just play outside until the sun goes down.
In an effort to control population growth, no person may have a child until granted a permit which may only be granted through a process of interrogation which could take up to 3 years and euthanasia is a common practice. Due to overpopulation and crowding, many new psychological abnormalities have been diagnosed. Crime persists as a result of a society under stress.

Recently, there have been a series of advertisements appearing on the World Web about the colonization of Mars which began supporting life in 2011 as a result of the top secret Genesis Project. In 2001, a third Viking landing craft successfully landed on Mars to extract scapolite (a mineral); however, the real purpose of the mission was to inject the essential building blocks of life into the soil and atmosphere of Mars. No one expected the experiment to work and the true nature of the mission was withheld from the general public. In 2011, the first detectable life forms began to appear and the people from Earth began their first expedition to Mars in 2016. Great masses of people have begun to prepare for emigration to Mars in 2031.

The Advertisement:

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**JOURNEY TO MARS!**

Be part of the GENESIS II Mission and view for yourself the results of the first mission!

- Previously extinct species living wild among breathtaking wilderness areas!
- Lush forests stretching as far as the eye can see!
- A new atmosphere with clean breathable air, free of all toxins!
- Soil so rich in organic material, seeds burst forth within days, producing crops in overwhelming abundance. And the taste is unlike anything ever before experienced on Earth!
- Beautiful Martian sunsets with the moons Phobos and Deimos suspended above the horizon!
- Miles of underground ice caverns and craters filled with pristine lakes!
- Hike along the Elysium Plateau and discover ancient volcanoes in the Tharsis Bulge. . . including Olympus Mons!
- Become a New Colony Explorer and catalogue the newest frontier!

All of this and you can own a part of it!! Don’t miss the opportunity of a lifetime. Journey with us through the stars among the newest of the carrier fleet. Enjoy spacious cabins, the finest selection of restaurants and numerous health and recreation facilities. . . all the conveniences of home in deep space.
Questions to be used in essay or discussion:

1. Can you add anything else that might have happened by 2030?

2. Does this future sound good or bad to you? Why?

3. After you read the ad, decide if you want to stay on Earth or emigrate to Mars and explain why. Remember, once you decide, it will be another 15 years before you can go back.

4. If you stay on Earth, what do you hope happens in the future and what will you do to make sure it happens?

5. If you go to Mars, what are your expectations of what will happen there and what would you do if things don't go as planned?
VOYAGE TO MARS

The Reality:

To be read and discussed only after written essays are complete and discussed in the classroom.

As was true for the emigrants of the 1800's, the modern student/ emigrant will find that many of the claims made about the red planet are false and in addition, there are many other surprises awaiting them...

On the way over... The carrier fleet was often pelted with meteors and hit with space debris, which resulted in loss of life. Any damage done to the carrier could delay the journey, in which case the vessel may never reach Mars or Earth due to changing elliptical orbits.

Overcrowding and space was a problem and the carrier fleet overbooked to gain higher profit.

Space sickness could last the entire journey as a result of recycled oxygen and new strains of non-treatable respiratory ailments were common. Restaurants were quickly depleted of fresh foods, which were replaced with GEL (Global Essentials of Life), a series of bad tasting gel caplets which provide nutrients. Rats and other vermin were still prolific and were sometimes eaten.

Upon arrival... Many emigrants found what they were looking for and the Mars of the ad was a reality for them. These were the first arrivals. However, other less fortunate colonists fell prey to the many pitfalls of Martian life. Not all of Mars was rejuvenated by GENESIS, in fact, the process was still in its infancy and there were only a few pockets of land that could be found that fit the description in the ad. Most colonists simply moved underground and earned a good living by mining. They believed that given enough time, they would again see the surface.

Great dust storms filled the atmosphere, further complicating respiration, not to mention the rise of new diseases the colonists were not immune to.

A few Martian species, particularly those of the genus Ornon, evolved into bloodthirsty man hunters with a keen intelligence.

As you can see, there are many similarities between immigration in the 1800's and the one in this scenario.