

MARS YEAR 84

Nearly twenty Mars years ago, the extraordinary story of two children who discovered life on Mars heralded the beginning of a new era for the Marineris Colony and all humans living and working on the Red Planet.

Now, after many years, researchers have uncovered documents from the Marineris archives which shed new light on the discovery and the events that led to it.

Those documents are published here together for the first time.

What follows is a story like no other...

28th May 2060

Dear Brand-New Diary of Adventure,

Today was our very last visit to Gran before our epic mission to Mars. Mum and I travelled there on the air tram, like usual. Did you know that air trams travel really, really fast? I looked it up on the map app on my webspectacles as we sped over the tall tower blocks and green parks. At one point, we got up to 147mph!

I asked Mum if that's how fast we'll be travelling through space. She said that the rocket will be much faster – over twenty thousand miles per hour!

Twenty thousand! That's mega-fast. That's stomach-churning, brain-melting fast. Sometimes, when we're on the air tram, I play games to make the journey more fun. Today, I imagined that I was a space pilot, speeding through the galaxy. Outside the windows, stars and planets zoomed past, blurring into streaks of light. An alien spaceship approached with lasers beaming but I was ready to zap it into another dimension as soon as it got into range.

"Pow! Pow-pow-pow! Pow!"

"Oh Jazz, you're not shooting aliens again," said Mum as the other people on the tram stared. "We like aliens!"

I explained that they had us cornered in the outer spiral arm of a distant galaxy and that I had no choice.

Mum said that I should at least try to bring one back alive so that she could study it. That's what Mum does for a living. She's an extraterrestrial-life researcher — an alien scientist.

I performed a lightspeed U-turn to capture an alien fleeing the shattered spaceship in a life raft.

"Hmmm," Mum said, pretending to investigate my captured alien. "It has bug eyes, seven legs, a spiky exoskeleton and liquid brains. This is like nothing I've ever seen before, Jazz. We could win the Galactic Discovery Prize for this."

"Do you think that's what the alien life on Mars will look like?" I asked.

Questions

1. What is the name of the colony on Mars that humans have established?

2. From the first section, find and copy a phrase which suggests that the documents have not been seen before.

3. How fast will Jazz and her Mum be travelling through space? Circle one.

147 mph

20,000 mph

1,000 mph

Faster than light

4. What is Mum's job? Circle one.

an extraterrestrial-life researcher

a space pilot

an air tram driver

5. Put a tick in the correct boxes to show which descriptions Mum uses to describe the pretend alien.

Mum's description	
bug eyes	
three legs	
a spiky exoskeleton	
no brains	

6. Put a tick in each row to show whether the events really happened in the story or were imagined by Jazz.

	Really Happened in the Story	Imagined by Jazz
Mum and Jazz travelled by air tram		
Jazz looked up the map using webspectacles		
stars and planets zoomed past the windows		
Jazz was shooting aliens		

7. How did Mum feel about Jazz's imaginary game?
