Lesson 7: Touchdown Mars!

Purpose: To facilitate and engage students’ imagination about the processes and skills needed to explore our Solar System.

Standards

NCTE/IRA Standards for English Language Arts

Standard 1: Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts...to build and understanding of themselves...acquire new information.

Standard 5: Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

Standard 12: Students use spoken, written, and visual information to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

National Science Education Standards

Science as Inquiry – Content Standard A

1. Abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry.
2. Understanding about scientific inquiry.

Science and Technology – Content Standard E

1. Understanding about science and technology – scientists and engineers often work together in teams.
2. Understanding about science and technology – tools help scientists make better observations.

Overview

Robotic exploration is important to our understanding of Mars and the Solar System. It is through knowledge gained from robotic exploration that we will be able to someday send humans to the red planet. This lesson will give students an opportunity to learn basic information about Mars and space exploration and give them an opportunity to practice their writing skills.

Understandings

1. Simple machines affect our everyday lives.
2. Simple machines make tasks easier.
3. Our knowledge and understanding of our Earth and Solar System changes and/or expands as new discoveries are made.

Materials

2. Paper, pencils, crayons, & colored pencils

Time

Thirty to 60 minutes to read and discuss book
Thirty to 60 minutes to construct book

Directions

1. Read and discuss the book.
2. As a class discuss how to create an ABC book on Mars based on the students’ current level of Mars knowledge. You may wish to re-visit the PowerPoint presentation from Lesson 4: History of Mars Exploration.
3. Have students work individually or in pairs to create their own Mars ABC book following the example of Touchdown Mars! You can have the students display their books in the school library or share their books with younger students.

For Younger Students

For younger students you may want to create a class ABC book.