

The First Family on Mars

by Janice Marriott

Summary

A family is hoping to be selected as the first family to live on Mars. When their house at the Mars training base burns down, they have to be resourceful in order to live in an unusual and tiny place.

Features of the Text

- First-person narrative
- Problem-solving focus
- Interaction between the characters
- Factual information about space travel

Purpose

The First Family on Mars can be used for the following purposes:

- introducing the ideas and vocabulary in the associated nonfiction title;
- exploring the factual information in a fiction text;
- exploring dialogue;
- making inferences;
- identifying the problems and solutions in a text.

Following Up

The students can:

- use the copy master on page 85 to record the problems the family experienced and their solutions
- list the pros and cons of living in an unusual place
- write thought bubbles to show the characters' thoughts and feelings on page 14.

Guided Reading Summary

Introducing the text

Look at the cover of the book and ask the students to predict when and where the story is set. Encourage them to discuss what they know about Mars.

Reading and discussing the text

Ask the students to read to the end of page 5. Discuss whether their predictions about the setting of the story were correct.

- *Where do you think the training base is located? Why?*

Ask the students to read to the end of page 9 and to think about the problems the family are facing in their new home.

- *Why would it be difficult to live in a small space?*

The students can now read the rest of the story to find out how the family adjusted to living on the plane.

- *How would you feel about living on a plane?*