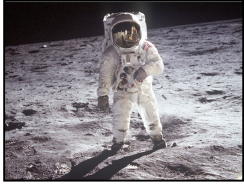


“So you still want to be an astronaut?”



(Astronaut images courtesy of NASA and Detroit Science Centre)

Two year 10 pupils, Amreesh and Gemma, told their teacher that they would like to be astronauts when they were older. Their teacher asked the rest of the class to write down some of the problems that might be encountered when travelling to, say, the planet Mars. After reading some of these problems and potential hazards, the teacher asked Amreesh and Gemma whether they would *still* like to go into space!

Activity 1.

Some of dangers of space travel are listed below. Study these and, in small groups, decide whether you think they are a real hazard (tick the box) or not very serious/highly unlikely (cross the box).

Time delays would cause communications problems with Earth.	
Motion in space can lead to headaches, dizziness and nausea.	
Radiation from cosmic rays and solar flares would be very dangerous.	
The loss of regular sleep would disrupt human 'body clocks'.	
Reduced physical activity leads to a weakening of muscles.	
Boredom would be a major problem during the flight to Mars.	
The spacecraft might be attacked by aliens.	
Bones lose calcium and this can cause them to be weak and brittle.	
An asteroid or other large rock might collide with the spacecraft.	

Activity 2.

In small groups, discuss and write down some of the **good points** about space travel.

Activity 3.

On a journey to another planet, astronauts would need to take some essential items on a long space journey.

From the list below, select those items that you would think would be vital on a long space journey. For each item, write down two sentences to describe **why** you think these would be vital.

MP3 player

hair drier

sun tan cream

food

water

Swiss army knife

mobile phone

oxygen

camera

space sickness pills

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy book by Douglas Adams