

Task: Benefits and Drawbacks of Space Travel

Explore space travel and previous space missions. What are the benefits of space travel? What are the drawbacks of space travel? Complete the **Benefits and Drawbacks** table.



Tip: To learn more about the drawbacks of space travel read the ideas on the next page.

Benefits of Space Travel

Drawbacks of Space Travel

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Since 1964, there have been at least nine failures of satellites or craft with radioactive substances on board. When such accidents happen, the nuclear material is, ideally, relatively safely contained. In principle, it can be retrieved but in practice, it is likely to be lost into the environment.

Suppose some of our own bacteria travel to Mars on our spacecraft, survive on the surface, but mutate in the intense UV radiation. What kinds of diseases could they cause when human explorers arrive?

Microscopic organisms can survive and mutate in the higher radiation levels of space stations such as Mir. What would happen if they came back to Earth as passengers on an astronaut's clothing?

Consider the possibility of dangerous Martian microbes arriving on Earth in samples returned by robot explorers. Will quarantine conditions be sufficient?

Plummeting Junk can cause injury and death or damage to structures and the environment.