

Middle Schools create a supportive environment to reach all adolescent learners. Students at Titusville Middle School celebrate learning achievements AND nurture their "inner authors" through...

MIDDLE MATTERS



Headed for Space & Mars

By: Janae Dawson

As a child I always dreamed of going to space, so when I got the call from NASA I was the most excited person on this planet. I had been waiting to hear from them for what felt like decades, ever since I had finished my training, but it was really only weeks. When I picked up the phone, they explained I would go on a 1 year mission to be the first person on the planet Mars. I knew it was risky, but it was everything I had ever dreamed of coming to life. They also explained that I could bring someone with me. As soon as they said that, I knew I was going to bring my friend Suzi from space training camp. I am going to need to invite her and get packing for this once in a lifetime opportunity. Hopefully, she's up for the challenge.

That night, I called Suzi to tell her the incredible news. Before I could even finish talking, her answer was immediately YES. We were so excited, although we knew we had to be focused because we leave for our mission in exactly one month. I decided I was only going to bring a tiny bag with only the necessities. I can't bring too much because the spaceship is already fairly small and all that junk would make it feel that much more crowded. I told Suzi exactly that, and she thought it was brilliant.

The days began to feel so long, and I couldn't bear waiting any longer. I was counting down the days one by one, waiting to reach that final star. It felt like an advent calendar for Christmas, except the prizes were that I was getting one day closer to my adventure.

It was exactly one day until our launch, and Suzi and I have not been able to get a wink of sleep. We got together yesterday, making sure that we were stocked up with everything we needed. We decided to make a very organized check-

list, so we didn't forget anything. Once you're in space, you can't just come back for your hair brush. We had to arrive at the space station at 10:30 a.m., but our launch isn't until midnight. We have to arrive about 12 hours early so that we are one hundred percent sure that we have everything we need. We drove to the space station as fast as a cheetah. Soon enough Suzi and I had made it. We went through every last minute situation over and over and made sure that we were all set.

Only one minute remained till the launch started. Everything was set and ready to go, and Suzi and I were so excited that we could barely contain ourselves. The next thing I knew, I could hear those numbers. 10,9,8... oh my goodness... 6,5,4... hear we go... 3,2,1 BLAST-OFF! And off we went into our dream land.

It takes about six months to get to Mars on the ship we took. So for the next two months Suzi and I studied everything there is to know about Mars. We found that there are lots of controversy about Martians and if they are real or not. We really didn't know what to believe about that. We kept studying different things, and we found so much fascinating information.

But what wasn't fascinating was how annoying Suzi was being. We have been best friends for like six years; I thought I could handle a one year trip with her, but I guess I was wrong. I could handle it most of the time, but her constant talking was getting on my nerves. But other than that, everything was going great. Hopefully, she gets better.

After about a couple more months we had almost made it to the planet Mars. Everything was going great. Suzi wasn't being annoying anymore. We were having the time of our lives, and we studied all we ever



needed to know about Mars. Despite that, the big question about Mars was if there were actually Martians. One article would say they were real and the next would say otherwise. Suzi and I had a countdown going for days until we get to Mars. There were approximately ten days left. We still couldn't believe we were the first people ever to go to Mars. Nine days passed and when we wake up tomorrow, we will have made it to Mars.

Last night I could not sleep because all I could think about was Mars. But I realize now that it was totally worth it! As Suzi and I peered out the window, we saw the beautiful Glowey red and slightly orange planet.

Our space ship landed and next thing I knew we were standing on Mars! It was the best feeling I had ever experienced until suddenly Suzi started talking gibberish and had a slight yellow glow to her eyes. At first I thought she was just so astonished she couldn't speak and there was just a reflection in her eyes, but I knew something was really off.

I went over to her as quickly as I could, and I soon realized she was slowly darkening. Suddenly, I remembered about the book we read about Martians. All the things in that book related to Suzie's appearance. As I stood there clueless on Mars, I saw that Suzi was becoming a Martian and I thought to myself, "What do I do?"

I was thoroughly thinking of different ideas, then soon enough I knew what I had to do. I couldn't just let Suzi

Janae, daughter of Kevin and Tina Dawson, is a seventh grader at TMS. Below is her space story, written for ELA class.

stay on top of Mars as a Martian. So I knew even though it wasn't the best option for me, it was the best for her. I attempted to get us back in the shuttle but trust me it is a lot harder getting Martian Suzi in the shuttle rather than the normal Suzi. But after a couple of tries, I successfully got her in. My plan was not to go back to earth; it was to go into Mars. I didn't think this would work because our rocket is not designed to go into Mars, although it's really the only option we had.

As we went through Mars, all I could think about was what would happen to me. Would I become a Martian or struggle to stay alive as a human? I guess I won't know until we get there. I quickly stopped thinking about that when our rocket ship quickly plummeted into the rocky ground of Mars.

Surprisingly, Suzi and I were both ok, so we quickly hopped out of the rocket. When I got out, my eye was immediately filled with amazement.

There was a small little Martian town with a bunch of little Martians who looked identical to Suzi. I guess now we know the truth about Martians. I was so thrilled with the decision that I had made to come to Mars.

The only thing that was still making me nervous was what was going to happen to me. A couple days passed and Suzi seemed so happy, but I still didn't feel like a Martian, until that afternoon. The little Martian village had a mirror hung up in the town's bathroom and I saw my eyes had begun to turn yellow.

Oddly enough, I was so excited to finally fit in on Mars. I was just like Suzi and the others. Mars was such an exciting place and I can't believe a space trip to Mars became a lifelong experience inside the planet as a different kind.

Elevate Trampoline Park

Students pictured below enjoy their first mission trip to Elevate Trampoline Park!



ELEVATE TRAMPOLINE PARK

The first TMS mission of the year was to Elevate Trampoline Park on November 4th, 5th and 6th. Our mission days are an important program that was developed to encourage students to do well in school. They are part of our school-wide positive behavior program and incentivize student academic achievement and proper behavior. Students who had at least a 70% in each class, had one hour or less of detention, less than five tardies, and no unexcused absences were able to earn their boarding passes and attend the trip.

We are extremely excited to offer four mission days during the 2024-2025 school year. These missions are an opportunity for students to explore the world out-

side of our school campus and experience some amazing places. Our next mission will be to the Marc in Meadville at the end of the second quarter. Students will be able to swim and/or go ice skating for that trip. The expectations to earn a boarding pass and be a part of the mission will continue to increase and we are confident that students' achievement, behavior, and attendance will rise as well.

Congratulations TMS Students for a great job during the first quarter! Good luck on the second quarter, as we hope to take most of you on the trip!!!