



School Times Worksheet

The Martian

Missing words

Use the following words to complete the text below: desert, existed, made, mysteries, possible, protect, scientists, soil, snow, studying, surface, water

Water on the Red Planet?

Dark, narrow 100 metre-long 'streaks' have been observed on Mars. NASA believes that these have been formed by water 'flowing' on the _____ of the Red Planet.

These new findings were _____ by NASA's 'Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter' (MRO) which is circling the planet. The images from the spacecraft seem to show that liquid _____ flows from time to time on present-day Mars!

According to NASA's _____ the search for water on Mars has been part of its search for life in the universe. And the existence of water in the surface soil of Mars makes it even more possible that life once _____ on the Red Planet — and perhaps still does.

It is thought that salts in the Martian _____ lower the freezing point of a kind of the Martian 'liquid brine' (salt water). The same thing is seen on Earth when salt on roads causes ice and _____ to melt more quickly. And so, scientists believe that the streaks that have been observed are evidence of melting liquid water just below the surface.

The unusual streaks were first observed in 2010 on images sent back from the MRO's High Resolution Imaging Science Experiment. The MRO has been _____ the Martian surface Mars since 2006, using six different experiments. It is this long-term study of the surface in high resolution that has made it _____ for scientists to make these recent discoveries.

Of course, many Martian _____ remain. It is thought that the planet once had lakes with surface water. But where are these lakes now? What happened on Mars that caused the planet to turn into a red _____? And, more importantly, are there lessons we can learn that will help us _____ our planet?