

A close-up photograph of an astronaut in a white space suit floating in space. The astronaut's arms are extended, and they are holding onto a complex network of orange and black cables. The background shows the Earth's blue atmosphere and white clouds against the blackness of space. The word "Astronauts" is overlaid in a large, red, outlined font across the center of the image.

Astronauts



Talk About It

What do you think is happening in this photograph?



Find out more about astronauts at

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Astronauts in Training

by Benjamin Telicki

Vocabulary

endless sensible
realistic protested
universe paralyzed
astronaut

Dictionary

Using a Dictionary will help you to learn the pronunciation and meaning of a word.

Look up the meaning and pronunciation of *sensible*.



Ana Gomez spotted Larry Waters looking for a table in the cafeteria. “Hi, Larry!” she called out.

Larry smiled and brought his tray over. “Hi, Ana. You’re looking especially cheerful this morning,” he remarked as he sat.

Ana smiled broadly.

“You got your launch date, didn’t you?” Larry exclaimed.

“Yes, I did,” Ana replied. “Finally! The wait seemed **endless**. I have been curious about that planet since I was ten and now I’ll be on our first mission to Venus. We’re leaving ten months from now on April 17, 2016.”



“That’s **realistic**. You’ll have plenty of time to train your crew and they’ll have time to review the virtual trip before the actual flight. Congratulations, Ana. It sounds like you would have picked this mission if you had your choice of any planet in the whole **universe**.”

“Well,” replied Ana, “if I could go anywhere in the solar system, I’d pick Pluto. But that wouldn’t be a wise choice for a middle-aged **astronaut**. By the time we’re able to go there, I’ll be out of the space program! I’ll be **sensible** and stick to Venus. What about you, Larry? You applied for the next trip to Mars. It’s time you went as the commander.”

Larry **protested**. “I wish that were true, but Sergio Casinelli has been ahead of me since we left the

academy, and the remote control for his new leg attachment is ready. Sergio’s been **paralyzed** since he was a child. He’s really looking forward to his walk on Mars. If I’m not mistaken, though, the next trip to Mars is planned for April.”

“Wouldn’t it be great if we were headed for Earth’s nearest neighbors at the same time?”



Reread for Comprehension



Make Inferences and Analyze

Character A character’s emotions can change often. A character’s traits are longer-lasting parts of their personality. You can make inferences about a character’s traits from what he or she does, says, feels, or thinks in the story.

A Character Web can help you analyze a character’s traits. Reread the selection to find the traits for one of the main characters.

