

OUR PLACE IN SPACE

OLIVER JEFFERS



1. Moon- Journey time 1 year

Topic : Fake News

DISCUSSION POINTS:

What is Fake News?

Has Fake News always existed or is it a recent phrase?

From ancient Rome up to the present day, stories that are not true or are meant to be misleading have been used to make money, change people's views and opinions, and make us question who we can trust. Now, with the explosion of the internet and social media, it seems to be everywhere and travels faster than at any other point in history.

WHAT MAKES NEWS TRUE OR FALSE?

Where do you get your news from? (TV, Websites, Social Media, Newspapers)

Where do you think the people who report the news get their news from?



DEBATE IDEA:

The New York Sun Lunar Animals Article Series

In 1835 *The New York Sun* published a series of six articles about the discovery of life on the Moon. They described how there were fantastic animals such as unicorns, two-legged beavers and even flying bat-men!

The name on the articles 'Dr Andrew Grant' claimed the discoveries were made by a colleague of Sir John Herschel, a well-known astronomer at the time.

CONSIDER TWO POINTS OF VIEW.

- What reasons do we have to believe that these discoveries are true?
- What reasons do we have to believe that these discoveries are false?

Each group has to research and suggest evidence to back up their theories and present this evidence to make a case for their argument.

It is, of course, fake news. These made-up stories were very popular, and sales of the paper shot up as readers all wanted to find out about this amazing 'discovery'. Grant was a fictional character. The articles were most likely written by Richard Adams Locke, a *Sun* reporter educated at Cambridge University. Intended as satire, they were designed to poke fun at earlier, serious speculations about extraterrestrial life.

It still happens today a lot on social media. Sometimes comedy accounts will publish a made-up story supposed to make us laugh, and people share it thinking it's true. This is another form of fake news.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to think more critically and consider the source of information and whether they believe it or share it. Students should also be able to understand the implications of sharing fake news.

EXTERNAL REFERENCES

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zwcqn9q>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/young-reporter/lesson-1-real-news-vs-fake-news/z899vwx>

<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-great-moon-hoax>

*Deposited August 29. 1838
At the Clerk's Office South District
of New York*



Entered according to Act of Congress 1835 by Henry R. Day in the Office of the Clerk of District Ct of the United States for the Southern District of New York.

LUNAR ANIMALS AND OTHER OBJECTS.

Discovered by Sir John Herschel in his Observatory at the Cape of Good Hope and copied from sketches
in the Edinburgh Journal of Science.

For Description, see Pamphlet Published at the Same Office.

THE FAMOUS MOON HOAX ARTICLE THAT FOOLED THE WHOLE WORLD

(Continued From Preceding Page.)

bles of human savages, and from the appearance of smoke in nearly all of them there is no doubt of its being accounted with the use of fire.

The largest lake described was 266 miles long and 193 wide, shaped like the Bay of Bengal and studded with volcanic islands. One island in a large bay was pinnacled with quartz crystals as brilliant as fire. Near by ranged zebras three feet high. Golden and blue pheasants strutted about. The beach was covered with shellfish. Dr. Grant did not say whether the fish-making beavers ever held a clam-bake there.

The *Six* of Friday, August 28, 1835, was a notable issue. Not yet two years old, Mr. Day's newspaper had the satisfaction of announcing that it had achieved the largest circulation of any daily in the world. It had, it said, 11,440 regular subscribers in New York and 700 in Brooklyn and it sold 1,000 in the streets and 1,220 out of town, a grand total of 13,560 copies, as against the 17,000 circulation of the *London Times*. The double cylinder Napier press in the building at Nassau and Spruce streets—the corner where the *Tribune* is to-day and to which *The Six* had moved on August 1—had to run ten hours a day to satisfy the public demand. People waited with more or less patience until 1 o'clock in the afternoon to read about the moon.

That very issue contained the most sensational instalment of all the moon hoaxes, for through that mystic chain which included Dr. Grant, the supplement of the *Edinburgh Journal of Science*, the "medical gentleman immediately from Scotland" and *The Six* public curiosity as to the presence of human creatures on the orb of night was satisfied at last. The astronomers were looking upon the cliffs and crags of a new part of the moon: but while gazing upon them in a haze of about half a mile we were startled with astonishment to perceive that monstrous hosts of large winged creatures wholly unlike any kind of birds, and with a slow, even motion from the cliffs on the western side and alight upon the plain. They were first noticed by Dr. Herschel, who exclaimed:

"Good gentlemen, my theories against your proofs, which you have often found pretty hard even yet, we have here something worth looking at. I was confident that if ever we found beings in human shape it would be in this longi-

tude, and that they would be provided by their Creator with some extraordinary powers of locomotion. First, exchange for my Number 10."

This lens, being soon introduced, gave us a fine half mile distance, and we counted three parties of these creatures of twelve, nine and fifteen in each, walking erect toward a small wood near the base of the eastern precipice. Certainly they were like human beings, for their wings had now disappeared and their attitude in walking was both erect and dignified.

Having observed them at this distance for some minutes we introduced lens H.2, which brought them to the apparent proximity of eighty yards—the highest clear magnitude we possessed until the latter end of March, when we effected an improvement in the gas burner.

About half of the first party had passed beyond our canvas, but of all the others we had a perfectly distinct and deliberate view. They averaged four feet in height, were covered, except on the face, with short and glossy copper colored hair, and had wings composed of a thin membrane, without hair, lying snugly upon their bodies, from the top of the shoulders to the calves of the legs.

The face, which was of a yellowish flesh color, was a slight improvement upon that of the large orang-utan, being more open and intelligent in its expression and having a much greater expanse of forehead. The mouth, however, was very prominent, though somewhat relieved by a thick beard upon the lower jaw and to lips far more human than those of any species of the Simia genus.

In general symmetry of body and limbs they were infinitely superior to the orang-utan, so much so that but for their long wings Lieut. Drummond said they would look as well as a parade ground as some of the old cockney militia. The hair on the head was a darker color than that of the body, closely curled, but apparently not wavy, and arranged in two curious semicircles over the temples of the forehead. Their feet could only be seen as they were alternately lifted in walking, but from what we could see of them in so transient a view they appeared thin and very protuberant at the heel.

While passing across the canvas and whenever we afterward saw them these creatures were evidently engaged in conversation; their gesticulation, more particularly the varied action of the hands and arms, appeared impassioned and emphatic. We hence inferred that they were rational beings, and although not perhaps of so high an order as others which we discovered the next month on the shores of the Bay of Rainbows, that they were capable of producing works of art and contrivance.

The next view we obtained of them

was still more favorable. It was on the borders of a little lake, or expanded stream, which we then for the first time perceived running down the valley to the large lake, and having on its eastern margin a small wood. Some of these creatures had crossed this water and were lying like spread eagles on the skirts of the wood.

We could then perceive that their wings possessed great expansion, and were similar in structure to those of the bat, being a semi-transparent membrane expanded in curvilinear divisions by means of straight radii, united at the back by the dorsal integuments. But what astonished us very much was the circumstance of this membrane being continued from the shoulders to the legs, until all the way down, though gradually decreasing in width. The wings seemed completely under the command

of volition, for those of the creatures whom we saw basking in the water spread them instantly to their full width, waved them as ducks do theirs to shake off the water, and then so instantly folded them again in a compact form.

Our farther observation of the habits of these creatures, who were of both sexes, led to results as very remarkable that I prefer they should be first laid before the public in Mr. Herschel's own work, where I have reason to know that they are fairly and faithfully stated, however incredulously they may be received.

The three families then almost simultaneously spread their wings and were lost in the dark confines of the canvas before we had time to breathe from our paralyzing astonishment. We scientifically demonstrated them the vespertilio homo, or man bat, and they are doubt-

less innocent and happy creatures, notwithstanding some of their amusements would but ill comport with our terrestrial notions of decorum.

So ended the account, in Dr. Grant's words, of that fateful day. The editor of the supplement, perhaps a cousin of the "medical gentleman immediately arrived from Scotland" added that although he had of course faithfully obeyed Dr. Grant's injunction to omit "these highly curious passages," he did not "clearly perceive the force of the reasons assigned for it," and he added:

From these, however, and other prohibited passages, which will be published by Dr. Herschel with the certificates of the civil and military authorities of the colony, and of several Episcopal, Wesleyan and other ministers who, in the month of March last, were permitted un-

der the stipulation of temporary secrecy to visit the observatory and become eyewitnesses of the wonders which they were requested to attest, we are confident his forthcoming volumes will be at once the most sublime in science and the most intense in general interest that ever issued from the press.

New York now stopped about all discussion of human slavery, the high cost of living—apples cost as much as four cents apiece in Wall Street—and other familiar topics, and devoted its talking hours to the man bats of the moon. *The Six* was stormed by people who wanted back numbers of the stories and flooded with demands by mail. As the text of the *Journal of Science* article indicated that the original narrative had been illustrated there was a cry for pictures.

Mr. Day was busy with the paper and its overworked press, but he gave Mr. Locke a free hand, and that scholar took to Norris & Baker, lithographers, in the Union Building, Wall Street, the drawings which had been entrusted to him by the "medical gentleman immediately from Scotland." Mr. Baker, described by *The Six* as quite the most talented lithographic artist of the city, worked day and night on his delightful task, that the illustrations might be ready when *The Six's* press should have turned out in the hours when it was not printing *Six's* a pamphlet containing the astronomical discoveries.

"Dr. Herschel's great work," said *The Six*, "is preparing for publication at ten guineas sterling, or \$50; and we shall give all the regular subscribers of it for 12 or 13 cents." The pamphlets were to be sold two for a quarter; the lithographs at 25 cents for the set.

Most newspapers that mentioned the discovery of human creatures on the moon were respectful. *The Evening Post*, edited by William Cullen Bryant and Fitz-Greene Halleck—"the chanting chorists of the *Post*," as Col. Webb was wont to call them—only skirted the edge of doubt:

"That there should be winged people in the moon does not strike us as more wonderful than the existence of such a race of beings on earth; and that there does or did exist such a race rests on the evidence of that most venerable of creatures Peter Wilkins, whose celebrated work not only gives an account of the general appearance and habits of a most interesting tribe of flying Indians, but also of those more delicate and engaging traits which the author was enabled to discover by reason of the conjugal relations he entered into with one of the females of the winged tribe.

Peter Wilkins was the hero of Robert Paltock's imaginative book, "*The Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins, a Cornish Man*," published in London in 1750. Paltock's winged people, said Southey, were "the most beautiful creatures of imagination that were ever devised."

The instalment of the discoveries printed on August 25 revealed to the reader the great Temple of the Moon, built of polished sapphire, with a roof of some yellow metal supported by columns seventy feet high and six feet in diameter.

It was open on all sides, and seemed to contain neither seats, floors, nor decorations, but it was a light and airy structure, nearly a hundred feet high from its white, glittering floor to the glowing roof, and it stood upon a round

green eminence on the eastern side of the valley. We afterward, however, discovered two others which were in every respect dissimilar to this one; but in neither did we perceive any visitants except flocks of wild doves, which alighted on its lacinated pinnacles.

Had the devotees of these temples known the way of all things, or were the latter merely historical monuments? What did the ingenious builders mean by the globe surrounded with flames? Did they, by this, record any past calamity of their world or predict any future one of ours? I by no means despair of ultimately solving not only these, but a thousand other questions which present themselves respecting the objects in this planet; for not the millionth part of her surface has yet been explored, and we have been more desirous of collecting the greatest possible number of new facts than of indulging in speculative theories, however seductive to the imagination.

The conclusion of this astounding narrative, which to all 11,000 words, was printed on August 31, in the valley of the temple a new set of man bats was found:

We had an opportunity of seeing them actually engaged in any work of industry or art, and, so far as we could judge, they spent their happy hours in collecting various fruits in the woods, in eating, drinking, basking and jollering about upon the summits of precipitous.

One night, when the astronomers finished work, they negligently left the telescope in a perpendicular position. The risen sun burned a hole fifteen feet in circumference through the reflecting chamber and ruined part of the observatory. When the damage was repaired the moon was invisible, and so Dr. Herschel turned his attention to Saturn. Much of the discoveries here were technical, as *The Six* assured its readers, and the narrative came to an end. An editorial note added:

This concludes the supplement with the execution of forty pages of illustrative and mathematical notes, which would greatly enhance the size and price of this work without commensurately adding to its general interest. In order that our readers may judge for themselves whether we have withheld from them any matter of general comprehension and interest we insert one of the notes from these pages of the supplement which we thought it useless to reprint, and it may be considered a fair sample of the remainder. For ourselves, we know nothing of mathematics beyond counting dollars and cents, but to geometers the following new method of measuring the height of the lunar mountains adopted by Sir John Herschel may be quite interesting.

(To be continued in next Sunday's *Six*.)



Broadway, looking up from Bowling Green, at the time of the founding of *THE SUN* and the publication of the Moon Hoax.

2. Venus- Journey time 78 years

Topic : War – The Belfast Blitz

The Blitz is the name given to the bombardment of urban areas by the German air force in the Second World War.

Belfast was one of 16 cities across the UK to suffer as a result of the Blitz. The Luftwaffe carried out four raids on the city between 7 April and 6 May 1941, leaving over 1000 people dead.

The government had provided only four public air raid shelters in Belfast, and most of the city's searchlights had been sent back to England. In fact, over 1000 people from England had been evacuated to Belfast because it was felt to be so safe.

When an unobserved German plane flew over Belfast to identify targets in November 1940, it saw a city defended by only seven anti-aircraft batteries.

THE FIRST AND SECOND RAID

7th-8th April 1941, German bombers targeted Belfast with its first air raid. This was a small attack which many believe was to simply test Belfast's defences.

On Easter Tuesday, 15 April 1941, 180 German bombers took off from aerodromes in Northern France to launch a full raid on the city.

The amassed squadrons flew along the Ards Peninsula and approached Belfast by Divis Mountain. Many of the main strategic targets were missed, however there was still a lot of damage to the city.

The rescue and defence operations were hampered by the destruction of the Central Telegraph Exchange. This meant that communications with Britain and the local military defences were cut off. Additionally, cracks to the water mains led to a lack of water to supply the hoses of the fire crews, desperately struggling to save the burning buildings.

DISCUSSION POINTS:

What would you think about having to build and live in an Anderson shelter?

Who would all be in the Shelter with you?

DEBATE IDEA:

Do you think Anderson shelters were a good idea? Did they work?

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to understand the need for Anderson shelters during WWII and apply this contextual knowledge to their Minecraft task.

EXTERNAL REFERENCES

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zbqdbdm/articles/zytt2v4>

3. Mars- Journey time 148 years

Topic : Invention of Barbed Wire Fence

DISCUSSION POINTS:

**How did the students feel about the invention of barbed wire?
Was it necessary? Or was it invented out of greed?**

Land on planet Earth has always been a valuable thing. Early on, some humans realised the potential to develop land for their own use – to farm, to build on etc. The claim and division of land has caused many wars throughout our history.

**What if we think of ourselves as Earthlings on one planet,
rather than on individual pieces of land?**

**What can we do to protect our planet?
How can we make Earth a better place to live for everyone?**

DEBATE IDEA:

What story did you choose to print in the paper and why did you choose it?
Get the class to debate their choices and discuss the different points of view.

FURTHER READING:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-40448594>



4. Mercury- Journey time 173 years

Topic : Famine in Ireland

DISCUSSION POINTS:

How did the students feel seeing the paupers queue for watered down food?

How did the students feel being treated differently from them just because you were wearing different clothes?

DEBATE IDEA:

Were the workhouses a good idea in general? Trading hard labour and work for porridge, shelter and clothing?

What were the good things about the workhouses?

What were the bad things?

MERCURY





5. Sun- Journey time 283 years

Topic : Slavery Divide

DISCUSSION POINTS:

What difference did the slave trade make to the experience of black and indigenous people?

Were the conditions for the slaves on the ship good or bad?

DEBATE IDEA:

What are some of the reasons why slavery was justified in those times?

Does slavery still exist in modern times?

Benjamin Lay quoted the bible and said "all men [and women] should be equal". Do you agree?

Are human rights universal or are they given to us by governments?

FURTHER READING:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z2qj6sg/articles/z6cptrd>



6. Jupiter- Journey time 1200 years

Topic : Vikings

DISCUSSION POINTS:

Vikings used boats to sail to other countries and continents in search of silver and land.

Even though they had a population boom and were running out of farmable land to feed everyone, was it right to sail to other countries and take what wasn't theirs?

What materials did Vikings mainly use to build boats?

OTHER IDEAS:

Create a flat world and build your own Viking longboats in creative mode in groups.

7. Saturn- Journey time 2443 years Topic : Great Wall of China

DISCUSSION POINTS:

How was such an impressive feat of engineering achieved without the use of modern technology and resources? (and at what cost?)

Why was the wall built and by whom?

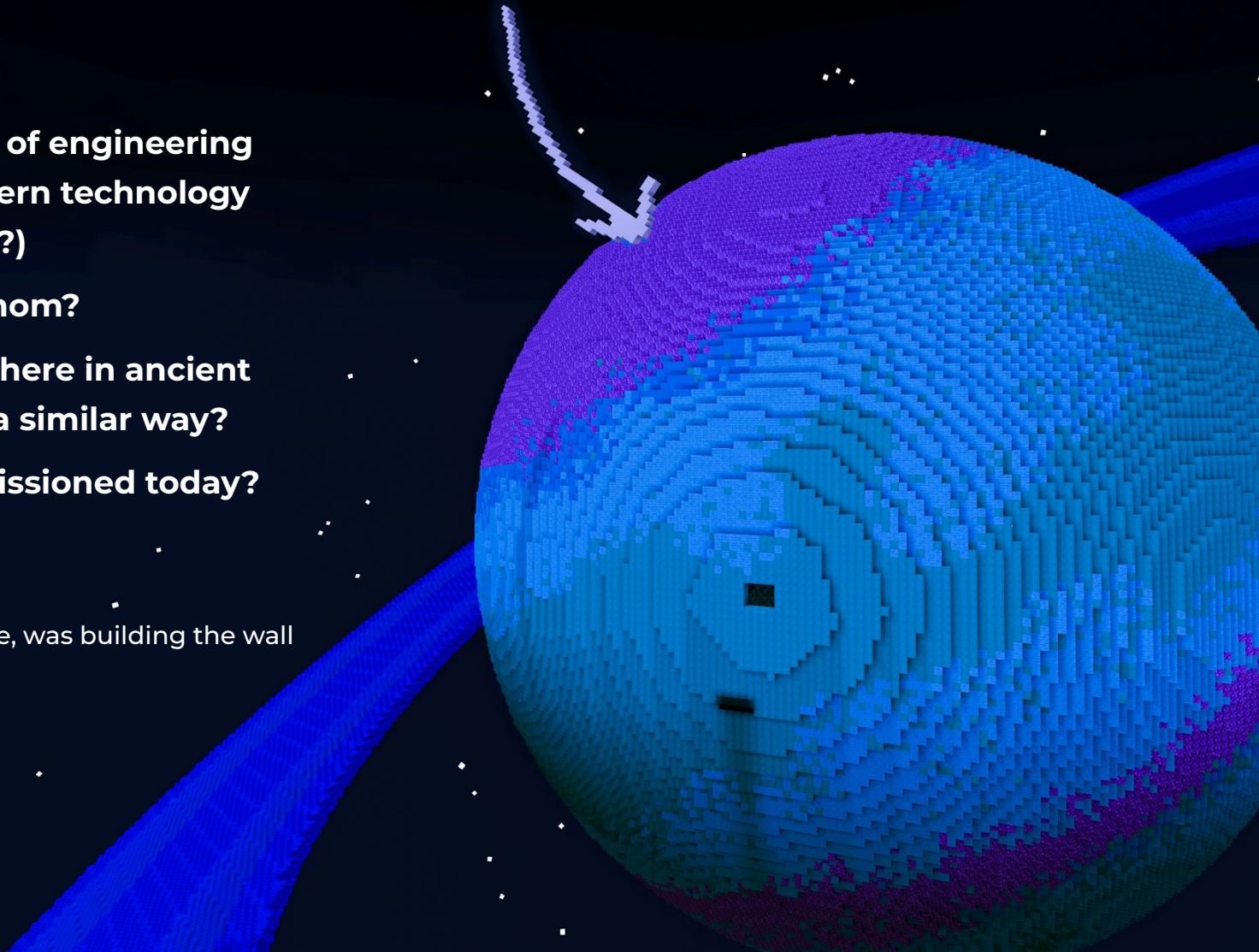
What other great structures are there in ancient history that were constructed in a similar way?

Would a similar project be commissioned today?

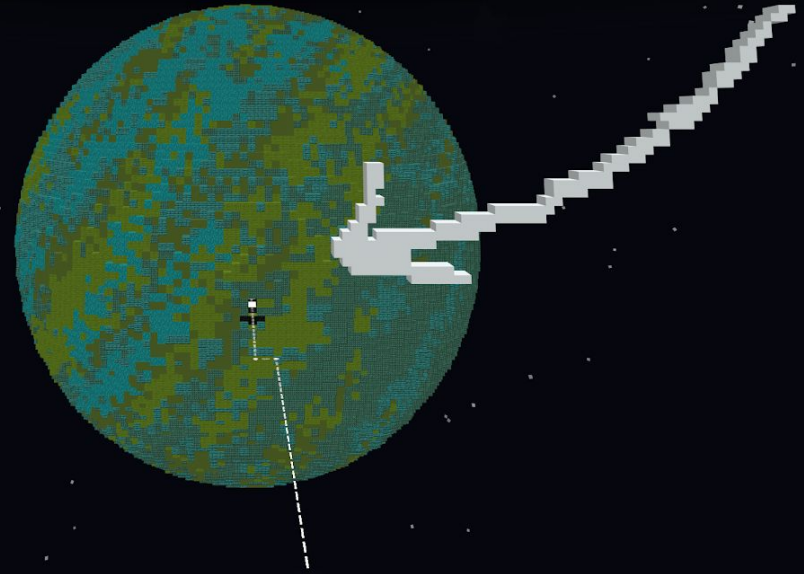
DEBATE IDEA:

Given the cost of human labour and sacrifice, was building the wall justified?.

SATURN



URANUS



8. Uranus- Journey time 5000 years Topic : Egyptians

DISCUSSION POINTS:

How was life in ancient Egypt different from your life today? Are there any similarities?

Egypt was once a great commercial and cultural force in the world. What countries are like that today?

How do these countries impact our everyday lives?

What issues did Egypt face that eventually led to its downfall?

DEBATE IDEA:

Egypt was not as civilised as everyone thinks. Discuss.

9. Neptune- Journey time 8278 years

Topic: Neolithic age

DISCUSSION POINTS:

How has farming changed the way we live our lives?

How do modern farming practices compare to neolithic farming practices?

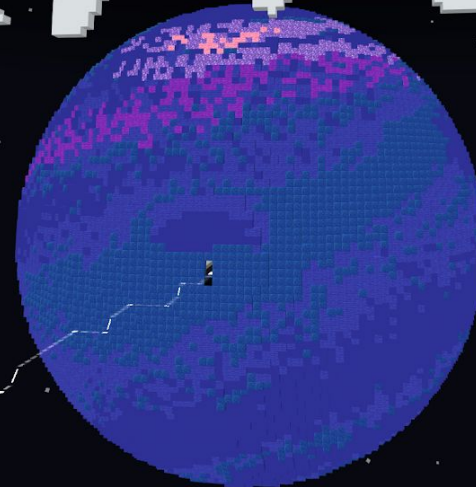
How did the invention of pottery change how we cook and eat?

DEBATE IDEA:

Domesticated monkeys are a good idea. Discuss.

Are all types of farming beneficial for us?

NEPTUNE





10. Pluto- Journey time 11,000 years

Topic : Cave Dwellers

DISCUSSION POINTS:

What do you think it would have been like to live in a cave?

What would you eat?

How would you eat as you would have no knives or forks?

How were cave paintings created, what tools did they use?