Mars for Earthlings

LESSON 18: The Origin of Life

In-Class Activity 2

Origin of Life

Mars Life: Through the Lens of Curiosity

Purpose: Students will become familiar with the Curiosity's mission as it pertains to finding life on other planets.

The Mission of Curiosity

View the following video from NASA regarding the mission of MSL Curiosity and answer the following questions:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHLbXTOaw7w&feature=relmfu

1. What type of "life" are scientists looking for?

2. Can instruments on the MSL Rover Curiosity detect life?

3. What compound is associated with all life?

4. What element is necessary for life?

5. Why would the layering of rocks at Gale Crater be of interest? What might that layering imply?

Looking for Life

1. Does Curiosity have any instruments that can directly test for life?

2. What are some of the challenges related to directly testing for life?

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