Second Prompt: You are on an expedition to found a colony on Mars, when from a nearby crater, a group of Martians suddenly emerges. They seem eager to communicate, but they're the impatient kind and demand you represent the human race in one song, image, memory, proof, or other idea. What do you share with them to **show that humanity is worth their time?**

* Something that promotes our intellectuality -
* Something that shows our ability to coexist -
* Something that shows dependability and loyalty

Enigma of the mind - book by Robert Campbell

Brain scan of a depressed person

Outline:

Humans have a primal urge to look into themselves and find out the origins of why things happen - stresses the complexity of humans which would most likely attract the aliens

Show how much life and emotions affect the way we live - a connection between the unknown and the biological self of humans - advocates to the aliens that our technology might help with their future advancements and inner knowledge

Sweating furiously, I have come to realise that the pressure was solely on me. The fate of future voyages lie in my hand; depicted in a single object that may or may not please the Martians just right.

A wall of an unknown material stood in front of me, almost like a mirage you would see half dead walking through a desert. Something retreated behind this cloudy barrier… I could only catch a glimpse of the creature. Silence enveloped the area until a faint beeping emerged from the darkness. Suddenly, a loud voice echoed through my space suit, “what do you have for us?”. The ominous query made me tremble.

\*paragraph 1&2:

The Hook:

Great use of sensory details that help the readers feel how he was on tenterhooks and understand the sense of urgency.

However, the most important detail of why the Martians asked him to provide a proof could be expressed with more detailed questions, such as why are the humans there? It seems more fitting to ask the foreigners to provide a reason of why humans want to communicate/work with them.

Slowly I took out a folded picture from my back pocket. I chose a brain scan of a depressed person. Now this may seem quite unusual given the circumstance but I think it represents humanity perfectly and encourages aliens to interact with us in a positive manner.

The writer has chosen a very interesting choice: a CT scan. As readers, it'd be better if we are given more details of how this scan supposedly looks as opposed to that of a person with no mental health issues.

Advancements in technology serve the purpose of alleviating humans from problems that inhibit our future ambitions and longings. Our influence escalated up to a point where complete dominance against other species was not only possible but happening at an expeditious rate. So why is it that both suicide and stress levels have been at an all time high. During this era, nations are globalising, which in turn gradually accept a wider body of ideals and perspectives, yet acculturative stress has been an increasingly huge problem for some humans. Human beings aren't just conquerors who salvage every piece of resource we find and completely lay waste to it. As complex as we think we are, all of us face the same problem: finding purpose. In essence, we are social creatures that search for greater meaning behind our actions through limitless interrelations with our world and others. Abstract concepts like the afterlife were created to fit our need for fulfilment. As Russian Psychologist Lev Vygotsky mentions, “ Through others, we become ourselves.” No person is who they are because they were born a particular way.

The author has displayed his understanding of complex philosophical questions that haunt most of us until today: humans’ life purpose.

Personally, I think the essay would be more effective and cohesive by expressing why the CT scan is chosen in this paragraph. There are many complex questions expressed here, such as why humans' stress levels are still high, and it would probably be clearer if the author directly correlates these conundrums with why he chose this brain scan.

\*\*As Russian Psychologist Lev Vygotsky mentions, “ Through others, we become ourselves.” No person is who they are because they were born a particular way.

The quote from the psychologist is an interesting choice, but it would be even better if the author mentions how humans can satiate some of their desire: through meaningful human connections?

We are curious beings in search of the truth but this image tells us we still suffer from internal problems that keep us from achieving perfection. Technology has progressed up to a point where identifying cognitive illnesses can be done casually. The scan is able to depict how a mental state can shift the brain’s biological processes to deactivate activity.

We now learn some of the reasons why the writer has chosen the CT scan, and the essay can be more improved by tying this statement with the paragraph below so that the readers can understand why depression reveals vulnerability. Hence, we are not a threat to the Martians.

Offering something so abstract and conveying it in a pragmatic manner is more than enough to convince Martians to prolong their communication with humans. While forms of literature can express the creativity in humans, an academic interpretation of the intangible concept of depression is more attractive and displays a potential benefit to collaborating with us.

The above paragraph can be placed after the paragraph below for better cohesion.

The scan implies how sensitive we humans are to external stimuli. This vulnerability would reduce the chances Martians perceive us as threatening. It's a sufficient yet very humbling image that explicitly states both our physical weaknesses and our technological strengths.

After a while the shadow behind the rock began to take form. Unbeknownst to me, the boundless barrier had already dissipated. A hand reached from the darkness and I was going to take it.

Great visual and effective writing. A good ending by coming full circle.

Overall, this essay excels in its demonstration of the author’s complex and profound thought about human existence. The author has also chosen a very interesting item to represent the human race, showing his creativity.

To make the essay more compelling, some of the ideas can be rearranged to show stronger connections between why the brain scan is chosen and why humanity deserves a chance. The complex philosophical questions of why humans need a sense of purpose can be tied to why the author and his team are there on Mars to found a colony. Lastly, since the prompt asks why humanity is worth their time, the essay would be better if it can focus on one or two specific emotions that the writer wants to evoke from the aliens. Is it that humans are non-threatening? Useful? Resilient?

By doing so, the readers can be more convinced on why the Martians are extending their hands, as illustrated in the memorable ending.

Best,

Melinda K

All-In Eduspace Editor