

2 Is mankind just another plague to avoid?

A. Read the text and fill in **Worksheet n°56** to describe the Martian landscape before and after Man's arrival. What strikes you?

B. Pick out the settlers' actions on Mars and comment upon the following sentence: *"to beat the strange world into a shape that was familiar to the eye"* (l. 11-13).

Help!

Tips

- Focus on the semantic fields and images.
- What is Man's arrival compared to? Why?

THE LOCUSTS

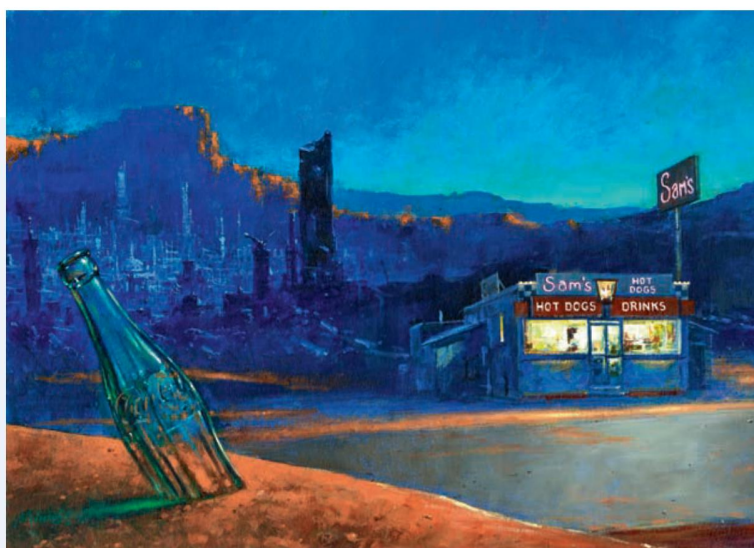
February 2002. Humans have started to colonise Mars on a full scale...

- The rockets set the bony meadows¹ afire, turned rock to lava, turned wood to charcoal², transmitted water to steam³, made sand and silica into green glass which lay like shattered⁴ mirrors reflecting the invasion, all about.
- The rockets came like drums, beating in the night. The rockets came like locusts⁵, swarming⁶ and settling in blooms of rosy smoke. And from the rockets ran men with hammers in their hands to beat the strange world into a shape that was familiar to the eye, to bludgeon away⁷ all the strangeness, their mouths fringed with nails⁸ so they resembled steel-toothed carnivores [...]. And when the carpenters⁹ had hurried on, the women came in with flowerpots [...] and pans and set up a kitchen clamor to cover the silence that Mars made waiting outside the door and the shaded window.
- In six months a dozen small towns had been laid down upon the naked planet, filled with sizzling

C. Go further. What is unusual and ominous (indicating evil) in the description of the settlers and their arrival?

D. Go further. Explain the title of the short story.

E. How does the illustration reflect the message of the story?



The Martian Chronicles: Off Season,
Les Edwards, 2009

neon tubes and yellow electric bulbs. In all, some ninety thousand people came to Mars, and more, on Earth, were packing their grips...

1 prairies • 2 charbon • 3 vapeur • 4 brisé •
5 sauterelles • 6 affluent en masse •
7 erase • 8 clous • 9 charpentier

The Martian Chronicles,
Ray Bradbury, 1950



YOUR TURN! 3 Who are we to colonise space?

Pairwork. Use what you have learnt to imagine the conversation between a NASA scientist, whose project is to start the first human colony on Mars (Pupil A), and an environmental activist,

who thinks that colonising another planet instead of saving Earth is not a good plan (Pupil B). Act out the conversation!