

Critical Issues Forum
Benchmark III
(2006-2007)

* The purpose of Benchmark III is to help you draw some conclusions of your own on whether space programs are a positive advance. You will, through your own research, come to a supported opinion.

* Your final task is to use the knowledge you have gained thus far in Benchmark I and in Benchmark II. You will try to determine the kinds of issues and/or problems that might arise in the development of space, and how these problems might be contained, controlled, or ameliorated. This task focuses on the identification and analysis of scenarios for the future.

* You will describe these scenarios within the context of the four domains: scientific/environmental, political/geopolitical, economic, and social/cultural.

* Make sure you carefully reference all materials you use in your text and in a bibliography.

Objective 1 - Building on the Ideas of Previous Imagination:
Use the imagination and creativity of your class to develop ideas of space and space activities

Suggested Activities:

1. Research movies that use space as a theme, such as Star Trek, Star Wars, Starman, Apollo 13, Deep Impact, etc. Preview such a movie and write a review of it.

2. Using the four domains, analyze the possible causes of the plot shown in the movie.

3. Use segments of, or the entire video and relate this to the concepts you have learned so far in this year's CIF.

4. Write an outline for a sequel to the story presented in your movie.

5. Create a solution to the problems illuminated in your movie.

Objective 2 - Scenarios for the Future

Given various scenarios, you will use the knowledge you have gained working on Benchmarks I and II to predict reactions to the events in the scenario.

Suggested Activities

1. Consider the following: A nation that up to now has not been known to be pursuing a space program has suddenly announced that it has successfully orbited a "military vehicle." Prepare a response that might be given by a) a nation of your choice, b) the United Nations, c) a non-governmental organization that monitors agreements.

2. A country has just renounced what has been believed to be a sophisticated space program. Prepare a response that might be given by a) a nation of your choice, b) the United Nations, c) a non-governmental organization that monitors agreements.

3. Use the knowledge you have learned so far in researching this year's topic to address and compare two of these areas of the world.

- China
- Europe
- India
- Japan
- Russia
- US
- Or other

Build a space-use scenario for the areas you have chosen (above) and show how the following factors will be affected by the chosen countries' space programs:

- economic growth
- political stability
- social stability
- accountability
- evolving technologies

4. Again, using the areas of the world that you chose in #3, address space programs through one of the following perspectives:

- Security
- Environment
- Economics
- Exploration

Objective 3 – Incidents

Using the knowledge you have gained, be able to discuss unforeseen incidents that might occur as the result of space Programs.

Suggested Activities:

1. Prepare a scenario of the consequences of a space object crashing in a populated area?
2. Explain the effects of an accident at launch of a nuclear powered space object.
3. Create your own space-related incident scenario: give the background; describe the incident; detail the effects of the incident; detail the reactions to the incident; explain how the incident would be resolved. Use and refer to all the objectives above.