

Mars dust storm threatens NASA rover

A massive dust storm blanketing about a quarter of the surface of Mars has threatened NASA's Opportunity rover, plunging the solar-powered vehicle into what NASA has described as a "dark, perpetual night"

Olympus Mons: Volcano stands 624km in diameter and 25km high

Valles Marineris: 4,000km-long canyon system

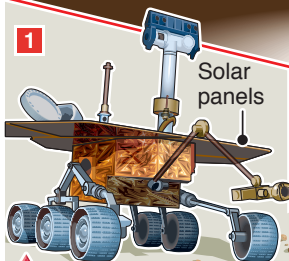
Acidalia Planitia

Schiaparelli: Impact crater

Gale Crater

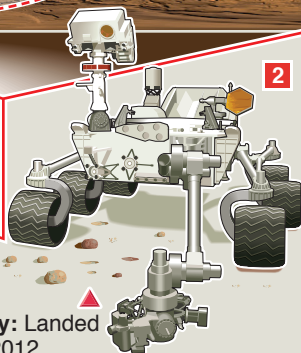
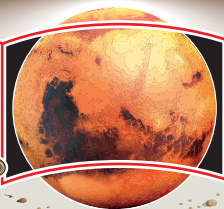
Perseverance Valley

Dust storm covers 35 million square kilometres



Opportunity: Landed in January 2004. Rover relies on energy from solar panels to operate.

Opportunity has entered low power fault mode – state where all subsystems, except its mission clock, are turned off



Curiosity: Landed August 2012. Powered by RTG (radioisotope thermoelectric generator), rover is not reliant on sunlight. **Images from Curiosity suggest dust storm has reached Gale Crater**