

Mars in Jars

An activity of the two Mars stories











Humans have spent billions of dollars exploring outer space. One reason is to look for any other planet with an ecosystem that would allow us to live there. To find out more, read **“Why the rush to Mars?”** and **“Can people colonise Mars?”** (pages 10–11, *What’s Up*, April 2021). By the time you are an adult, you may be able to visit Mars. Meanwhile, follow the steps below to create your very own Mars in Jars.

- 1) Watch this video about balanced ecosystems:

Understanding Ecosystems for Kids: Producers, consumers, decomposers

by FreeSchool → <https://youtu.be/bJEToQ49Yjc>

- 2) Based on known facts from the video and the *What’s Up* Mars articles, complete this table by answering these two big questions. Jot down phrases in point form.

First Big Question: Is Mars a suitable ecosystem for humans?	
YES! It's SUITABLE because...  _____  _____  _____  _____  _____	NO! It's UNSUITABLE because...  _____  _____  _____  _____  _____
Second Big Question: Would you like to visit Mars? _____ _____	

- 3) When the biotic (living things: plants and animals) and abiotic (non-living elements: water and minerals) are well balanced, the ecosystem can survive with no input other than energy (light). It is a self-sustaining ecosystem.

A closed terrarium, if done correctly, is an example of a self-sustaining ecosystem. Watch the following videos to see how you can build your own!

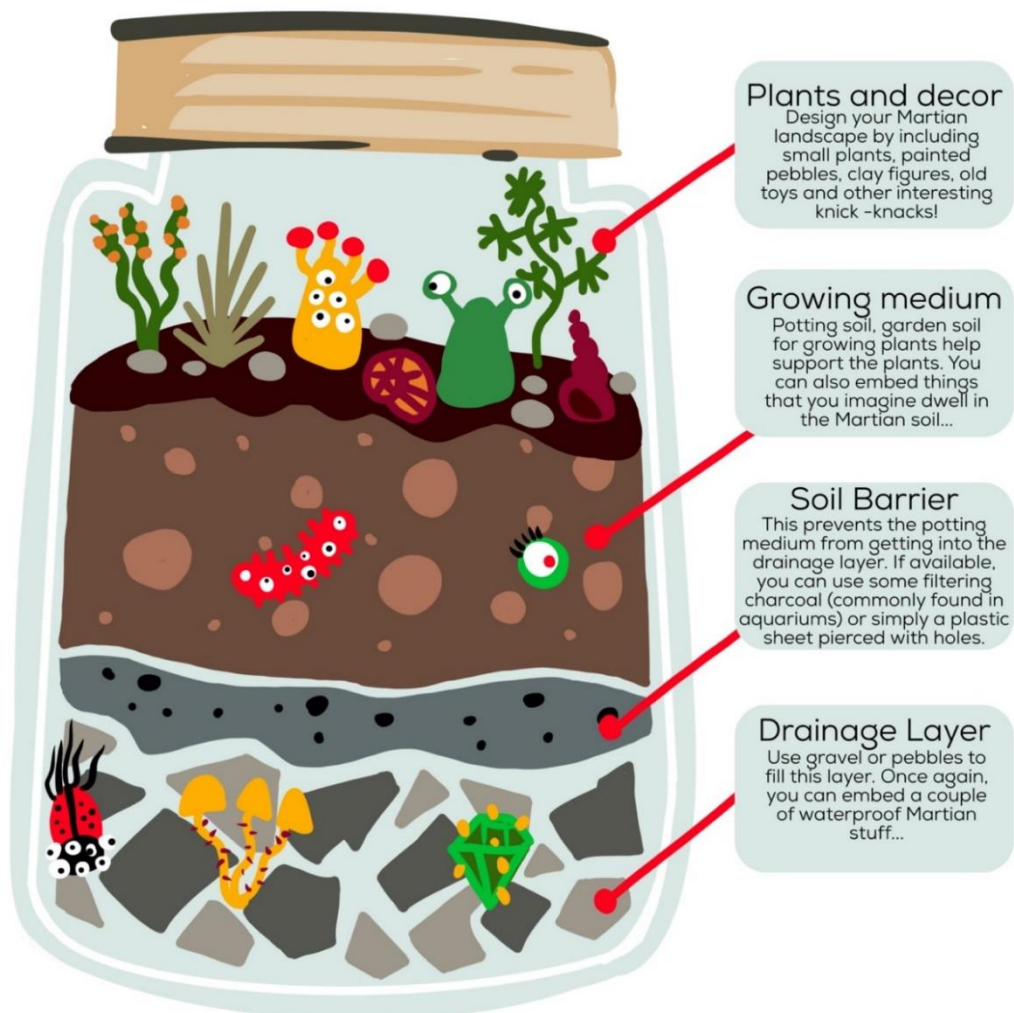
How to Create a Closed Native Terrarium by Natural World Facts

→ <https://youtu.be/y0u9k-MSo8U>

How to Make a Terrarium for Free by Garden Up

→ https://youtu.be/sdWsE_y7Tjw

- 4) Now, create a Mars-themed terrarium! Select materials and decorative items that reflect an imaginary slice of Mars. Then, create an interesting self-sustaining ecosystem. The following is a summary of basic materials required to build your very own MARS IN A JAR.



Have fun!