

Essay on Is Space Exploration A Waste of Time and Money?

It is difficult to say for sure that space exploration is a waste of time and money. On one hand, it looks wasteful to spend so much money just to send someone to the moon to collect some rocks. On the other hand, there is always the possibility of new discoveries that may benefit all of us, making all the efforts worthwhile.

Space exploration follows in the same spirit as the earlier explorations of man. If men like Christopher Columbus, Thomas Cook, Ferdinand Magellan and Francis Drake did not bother to explore as they did many years ago, the world that we know now would certainly be very different. Perhaps America and Australia would still be undiscovered.

The early explorers spent years on the seas. Many failed to discover anything worthwhile, but some did. Would we say that their trips around the world were a waste of time and money? Perhaps if we were living in their time we would have said so, but looking now at the contributions they made for mankind, we probably would say that their efforts were worthwhile.

So the same would probably apply to space exploration. So much time and money have been spent already on satellites, space probes, moon landings, the space shuttles, skylab and other space programmes. More time and money will continue to be spent on future programmes.

At present space exploration is still in its infancy. Man has not even gone further than our moon. In other words, we are not eligible to be called space explorers yet. Most of man's space programmes are concentrated on orbiting the earth in space shuttles and stations to learn more about the technical and biological aspects of space

travel. It would be foolish to send manned missions to Mars or Venus without knowing what lies ahead and how to cope with it. So much research and groundwork have to be done before a man can even try to go to another planet. Research and groundwork require much time and money. Would these constitute what some may say, wastage?

Only unmanned space probes have reached the other planets and have sent back data and pictures of the other worlds. These have taken years and lots of money. So manned missions are going to take more years and lots more money. We have to decide whether such time and money are worth spending. We could say that space exploration is wasteful and so remain on this earth without heading out to the stars. Conversely, we can say that space exploration is worth all the time and money and so travel out towards the stars to God-knows-what that may await us. The choice is ours.