

**Destination L1: A Thematic Unit**

**A Space Story:  
You are the Author**

**STUDENT ACTIVITY**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Two science fiction short stories by Ray Bradbury, *The Golden Apples of the Sun* and *The Wilderness*, form the basis of this writing activity. In this exercise, you get to author your own piece of science fiction.\* The story is started for you; as the author, you get to finish it and make it yours. Use your imagination to fill in the blanks of the introduction with words or phrases to write a science fiction story of your own.

\*Remember not to fall into the trap of writing fantasy and calling it science fiction. Fantasy generally deals in supernatural elements. For example, *Lord of the Rings*, by J. R. R. Tolkien and *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll are fantasies. On the other hand, science fiction, like *The Time Machine* by H. G. Wells, predicts how technology may advance in the future to change our world as we now know it.

**PROCEDURE**

1. After reading *The Golden Apples of the Sun*, and *The Wilderness* choose one of the two story introductions below. Your story will serve as a sequel to the original story. Complete your short story as though it were the next step in the adventure. What might happen next on the trip home for the *Copa de Oro* spacecraft and its crew in *The Golden Apples of the Sun*? What might be the next step at the end of *The Wilderness*? Do you think Janice and Leonora made their journey to Mars? What new experiences would that bring to the resulting story?

***The Golden Apples of the Sun, Part II***

Traveling north meant turning the spacecraft away from \_\_\_\_\_ toward home, a planet where \_\_\_\_\_. As they passed into darkness, it took a few minutes for their eyes to adjust. The crew realized how \_\_\_\_\_ it had been in the ship’s cabin. Suddenly, a warning sounded. It was the \_\_\_\_\_ alarm, and the crew sprang into action. A call came from the engine room. “Captain! We have a problem down here!” Then, another came from the \_\_\_\_\_ room, “Captain! You need to get down here fast! You need to see this!” The captain turned the controls over to \_\_\_\_\_ and headed for the \_\_\_\_\_. When he entered, he couldn’t believe his eyes. There before him was \_\_\_\_\_. He took a deep breath and said, “\_\_\_\_\_”

*Finish your story on the back of this page.*

***The Wilderness, Part II***

Janice awakened to a gentle shaking from Leonora. "Get up! The rocket is \_\_\_\_\_.  
Hurry!" She sprang out of bed and ran to the \_\_\_\_\_. Janice said to  
herself, "It's true! The day that we have waited for has come, and now \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_."

They could hear a flurry of activity out in the town; Independence was buzzing this morning. The front door  
flung open and there before them stood \_\_\_\_\_. "Ladies! We must hurry!  
Gather your belongings. There is no time!" Janice and Leonora grabbed their belongings, looked around  
their home, \_\_\_\_\_, and ran out the door. Quickly they boarded the  
\_\_\_\_\_, bound for \_\_\_\_\_. Soon, the Earth  
was a distant object in the sky. Janice looked at Leonora and said, "  
\_\_\_\_\_."

*Finish your story on the back of this page.*

2. After finishing the story in your own words, you will have completed your first draft.
3. Now read your story from the beginning to the ending, revising where necessary. Look for incomplete sentences, spelling and grammar errors, or unfinished thoughts that need development to aid the reader's comprehension. This is also a good time to insert any added futuristic technology that may not be present in your first draft. Look at your paragraph writing. Are paragraphs well-structured, coherent, and descriptive? Think about ways to make your writing better. Is there an apparent conclusion to your story?
4. After you have reviewed your draft, choose one sentence that you think is your best, and one that you think needs some work. Share these two sentences with your small group, making note of suggestions for revision.
5. After reviewing your revision notes and making any adjustments that you feel are necessary, prepare a final copy of your science fiction short story for submission to your teacher.