

Section Focus Phoenix Mars Lander

Chapter 5

In August of 2007, NASA launched the Phoenix Mars Lander in the hopes of uncovering liquid water beneath the north polar region of Mars. Phoenix arrived on March 25, 2008, entering the thin Martian atmosphere at 125 km (78 miles) above the surface. Protected by a heat shield, the craft used friction to slow its descent.

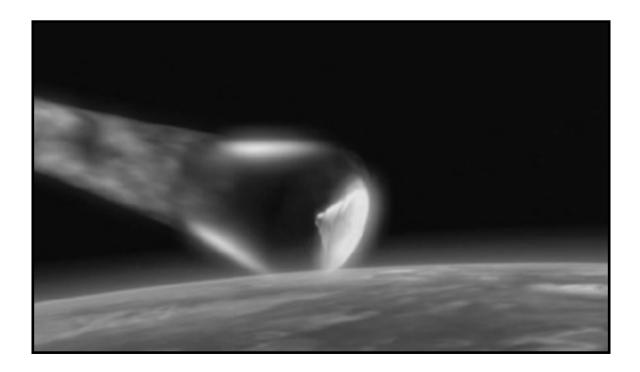


- 1. Why is it a concern that the exterior of a spacecraft experiences very high temperatures upon reentry?
- 2. If a metal pan with a metal handle sits on a lit burner for a long time, what happens to the handle?
- 3. When it's cold out, why does a jacket help you stay nice and warm?



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