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1. Nasa lands InSight robot to study planet's interior

- What InSight robot will study on mars?
- Why was Mars chosen for landing?
- How did NASA's InSight spacecraft land on Mars?
- What is different about the InSight mission?

GS paper 3 (Awareness in space)

In this video, you can find detailed answers for all the above questions.

The above article has been retrieved from:

Express News Service. (2018, November , 28). InSight on Mars: where, how and why. Indian Express. Retrieved from <https://indianexpress.com/article/explained/nasa-spacecraft-insight-on-mars-where-how-and-why-5466020/>

What is the context about?

- The US space agency Nasa has landed a new robot on Mars after a dramatic seven-minute plunge to the surface of the Red Planet.
- It ended an anxious wait in which the robot radioed home a series of updates on its descent.
- InSight is now sitting on a vast, flat plain known as Elysium Planitia, close to the Red Planet's equator. Before landing, Nasa had dubbed it the "biggest parking lot on Mars.

What InSight robot will study on mars?

- InSight won't be looking for life on Mars.
- It will study its insides — what it's made of, how that material is layered and how much heat seeps out of it. This is important because Earth and Mars used to be similar — warm, wet and shrouded in thick atmospheres — before they took different paths 3-4 billion years ago. Mars stopped changing, while Earth continued to evolve.
- With InSight, scientists hope to compare Earth to Mars, and better understand how a planet's starting materials make it more or less likely to support life.

Why was Mars chosen for landing?

- Mars and Earth were very similar — warm, wet and shrouded in thick atmospheres — before they took different paths 3-4 billion years ago. Mars stopped changing, while Earth continued to evolve.
- With InSight, scientists hope to compare Earth to Mars and better understand how our solar system's rocky planets formed 4.5 billion years ago and why they turned out so different – Mars cold and dry, Venus and Mercury burning hot, and Earth hospitable to life.

How did NASA's InSight spacecraft land on Mars?

- Mars has been the graveyard for a multitude of space missions. Up to now, the success rate at the red planet has been only 40 per cent.

- ❑ Landing on Mars is one of the hardest single jobs that people have to do in planetary exploration.
- ❑ The rover began its space journey in May this year and travelled over 300 million miles before landing on Mars today. Radio signals confirming the landing took more than eight minutes to cross the nearly 100 million miles (160 million kilometers) between Mars and Earth.

What is different about the InSight mission?

This will be the first probe to dedicate its investigations to understanding Mars' interior. Scientists want to know how the world is constructed - from its core to its crust. InSight has three principal experiments to achieve this goal.

- ❑ The first is a package of **Franco-British seismometers** that will be lifted on to the surface to listen for "Marsquakes". These vibrations will reveal where the rock layers are and what they are made of.
- ❑ A **German-led "mole" system** will burrow up to 5m into the ground to take the planet's temperature. This will give a sense of how active Mars still is.
- ❑ And the **third experiment will use radio transmissions** to very precisely determine how the planet is wobbling on its axis.