Is there life on Mars?

The Perseverance rover is looking for signs of ancient life on Mars by collecting rock and soil samples and testing them.

You can have a go at a similar experiment.

Collect 3 samples of Martian soil from school – one bag each of sample A, B and C. Your job is to test them for signs of life. Here is how.

1. Dissolve 2 teaspoons of sugar in 30 ml of warm water (45 – 50 degrees) and quickly add this to the sample. Do this for each bag.
2. Press the bag to remove the excess air and seal.
3. Mix the contents together by gently pressing the contents with your fingers, ensuring that the bag is completely sealed to prevent escape of carbon dioxide should microorganisms be present.

If there is any form of life in the bag, it will feed off the sugar in the warm, moist conditions. As it releases energy from the sugar, it will give off carbon dioxide. You will see bubbles and the bag will puff up.

This will take some time – watch the bags over a couple of hours to see if any of the samples do indeed contain microorganisms!

Please post your pictures and findings to seesaw!