**Discussion Questions about *The Martian***

***Choose any 2 of the following questions to answer about the movie. Answers must be in paragraph form with at least 6 sentences, and must answer the question completely. Include questions with essays. Any additional questions answered will be extra credit.***

2. What makes us root for a character to live in a survival story? In what ways do you identify with Mark? How does the movie get you to care about him?

3. Do you believe the crew did the right thing in abandoning the search for Mark? Was there an alternative choice? What would you have done?

4. Did you find the science and technology behind Mark's problem-solving accessible? How did that information add to the realism of the story?

5. What are some of the ways the movie established credibility with scientific detail? Which of Mark's solutions did you find most amazing and yet believable?

7. Who knew potatoes, duct tape, and seventies reruns were the key to space survival? How does each of these items represent aspects of Mark's character that help him survive?

8. How is Mark's sense of humor as much a survival skill as his knowledge of botany? Do you have a favorite funny line of his?

9. To what extent does Mark's log serve as his companion? Do you think it's implicit in the narrative that maintaining a log keeps him sane?

10. The movie provides almost no back story regarding Mark's life on Earth. Why do you think he made this choice? What do you imagine Mark's past life was like?

11. There's no mention of Mark having a romantic relationship on Earth. Do you think that makes it easier or harder to endure his isolation? How would the story be different if he was in love with someone back home?

12. Were there points in the movie when you became convinced Mark couldn't survive? What were they, and what made those situations seem so dire?

14. Did you believe the commitment of those on Earth to rescuing one astronaut? What convinced you most?

15. To what extent do you think guilt played a part in the crew's choice to go back to Mark? To what extent loyalty? How would you explain the difference?

16. How does the movie handle the passage of time? Did it transition smoothly from a day-to-day account to a span of one and a half years? How does the movie use the passage of time to build suspense?

17. Unlike other castaways, Mark can approximately predict the timing of his potential rescue. How does that knowledge help him? How could it work against him?

18. When Mark leaves the Hab and ventures out in the rover, did you feel a loss of security for him? In addition to time, the movie uses distance to build suspense. Discuss how.

19. Where would you place The Martian in the canon of classic space exploration films like 2001: A Space Odyssey, Apollo 13, and Gravity? What does it have in common with these stories? How is it different?

20. A survival story has to resonate on a universal level to be effective, whether it's set on a desert island or another planet. How important are challenges in keeping life vital? To what extent are our everyday lives about problem-solving and maintaining hope?