

Date 9 / 21 PV Log: (circle one) Poem / Movie / Picture / LyricTitle The Pale Blue DotAuthor / Director / Voyager 1 SpaceProbe

Context (Where Found / Viewed / Read?)

My friend, who is very interested in astronomy, told me about the pale blue dot, and so I researched it and decided to do a log on it.

Content / CD / Summary / Precis (Say? "Plot? Setting/Situation? Key lines/phrases scenes, etc? )

The Pale Blue Dot is a picture of planet Earth taken in 1990 from a distance of six billion kilometers from the planet. In the picture, Earth is shown against the massive, expansive vastness of outer space. There are also various scattered light rays in the image resulting from the picture being taken at an angle so close to the Sun.

Content / CM / Meaning? / Theme(s)?

The Pale Blue Dot is a humbling photo that represents so much more than it displays with its seemingly endless darkness and nothingness. From such a far distance at the outer edge of our Solar System, Earth appears to be a minuscule portion of all of the possibilities of life in existence. The Earth may not even seem particularly important or worthwhile from such a stance and viewpoint, as it stands as a tiny speck in the vast array of cosmic darkness. Nevertheless, Earth, for humans at least, is a place called home, in which there have been many triumphs and defeats, discoveries and explorations, and especially much suffering and chaos. It is the only place known to man to contain any form of life, and the Pale Blue Dot does not suggest any hope in finding life elsewhere anytime soon.

Form (Diction? Construction Terms? Symbolism?)

In the picture of the Pale Blue Dot, Earth is merely 0.12 pixel out of the 640,000 pixels that comprise the picture. The tiny dot, surrounded by complete and utter darkness represents both the vastness of the universe and the small, insignificant role that the Earth plays in it. It also proves how truly alone the inhabitants of Earth truly are on their meek little planet.

Commentary (What do you want to say? Why like? Questions? Synthesis / Allusions-Connections / Relevance to personal experience, to literature, 20Q's? etc.)? "Poetic" Traits?

The Pale Blue Dot is one of the most mind-blowing pictures I have ever seen in my entire life. It has completely rearranged my perceptions of life on Earth and the way I view the world. Moreover, the fact that the human race has developed such sophisticated technology to go as far as beyond the realms of our own Solar System is also a major accomplishment and astonishing feat. The picture is truly poetic because it makes the viewer contemplate life in general and realize how unimportant humans actually are. Carl Sagan could not be more clear in his speech about the picture at Cornell University when he said, "All of human history has happened on that tiny pixel, which is our only home." All of the significant achievements and milestones that humanity has reached may be entirely surpassed and undermined by some life forms out in the dark, unexplored vastness of outer space. Even more, human life on Earth, which occurs in a secluded and ignorant little bubble, may be entirely worthless and a waste of time, when in fact its contribution to the entirety of existence seems negligible.