

5-Paragraph Essay Sample

Are We Alone in the Universe?

Throughout its history humankind asked itself this question and constantly tried to answer “no”. The idea of sentient living beings who are not people is present in writings of historians, geographers and other scientists for as long as the science itself exists. Mermaids, cynocephali, various bizarre species of beast men, antipodes: all of them were embodiments of this dream. In course of time, the limits of the known Universe expanded and it became known that no such creatures existed. The only place to seek for non-human life now is other planets. Is there any hope for finding it?

There are a great number of theories concerning extraterrestrial life. According to the “rare Earth hypothesis”, the conditions on Earth are close to unique and the possibility of them taking place on any other planet is close to zero. However, this theory takes it for granted that the appearance of life requires conditions identical to those on Earth. But is it true? If life on other planets exists, it may be completely different from what we are used to not only in form, but in fundamental principles as well.

Of all the chemical elements only carbon and silicon seem to be suitable for being the basis of life, although silicon can form connections with far less other elements. Needless to say, we have never encountered silicon-based life forms, but if they exist, they may have properties that have nothing in common with what we used to associate life with.

According to another theory, life may be a rather common thing in the Universe; even in our Solar system at least several planets (Venus, Mars, Titan, Ganymede, and Europa) in addition to Earth show signs of having atmosphere and in theory may host some primitive life forms. All in all, taking into account the vastness of Universe and the minuteness of our knowledge of it, it is very improbable that life doesn't exist anywhere at all.

Of course, there is no definite answer to the question I used as a title. Nobody can say for sure that extraterrestrial life exists or not exists for the sheer fact that the part of the Universe we know is less than negligible. In my opinion, life may exist on other planets, but we are not going to find it very soon. And of course, if we find it, it will become the most important discovery humankind has ever made.