**War of the Worlds WebQuest**

**The Truth about the “War of the Worlds” Radio Broadcast**

**Begin by reading National Geographic’s article “War of the Worlds: Behind the 1938 Radio Show Panic*”*:** http://bit.ly/cKS41e

1. On what date did the War of the Worlds radio broadcast originally air?

2. What was that radio broadcast based on?

3. Why, according to historians, was this radio show so effective in convincing listeners that it was a real news broadcast?

4. Why did so many listeners miss the beginning of the radio broadcast, when it was made clear that the show was based on a fictional novel?

5. Why was the world “on edge” in 1938? (Hint: think about world history.)

6. How was the format used in “War of the Worlds” radio broadcast similar to the radio coverage of the Munich crisis the previous month?

7. How did Welles react when he heard about the panic while his radio play was still being put on?

8. How widespread was the misconception that the invasion was real?

9. Why did newspapers exaggerate the War of the Worlds “hysteria” story?

10. Why was radio so powerful to people in the 1930s?

11. What is one possible long-­term effect of the “War of the Worlds” radio broadcast panic?

**Next, read History’s This Day in History entry “Oct 30, 1938: Welles scares nation”:** [**http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/welles-scares-nation**](http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/welles-scares-nation)

12. Describe the layout of Welles’ radio play.

13. Why did the radio play seem realistic?

14. How did Welles react when he heard about the panic while his radio play was still being put on?

15. Do you think something like the War of the Worlds radio broadcast panic could happen today? Why or why not?