

Alternate Reality

Anything lying outside reality as we know it. These are classical science fiction and fantasy themes that encompass notions about what the future might be like, futuristic science and technology, and sometimes just plain old wacky ideas.



What-if Question 35 . 77 . 21

A series of extraordinary counterfactual scenarios relating to life, society, and the nature of reality.

- What if I faced an incredible situation?** 11 . 32 . 10: Anything from meeting one's self, to being accused of a murder that one did not commit, to finding one's self in a body of the opposite sex.
- What if my life were different?** 17 . 28 . 5: Anything from having a second chance at life, to being a ghost, to facing the prospect of spending eternity trapped in futile violence.
- What if reality were different?** 2 . 17 . 3: These themes explore the human consequences of alternate realities from a universe with alternate laws of nature to what a world would be like in which the devil were merely misunderstood.
- What if society were different?** 5 . 10 . 4: Anything from what society would be like if everyone did whatever they wanted to alternate histories like if the Roman Empire never fell or the Nazis had won the war.

Existential Risk 20 . 42 . 30

An event that would destroy an entire humanoid species or irreversibly cripple its civilization so that it could not reach its full potential.

- Attack from Outer Space** 17 . 8 . 2: The classical sci-fi scenario where a planet comes under attack by powerful invading aliens.
- Force Majeure Existential Risk** 5 . 8 . 16: Any event outside human control that could threaten the survival of intelligent life from a depleted ozone layer, to a sun going supernova, to a moon slowly spiraling into a planet.
- Man-made Existential Risk** 8 . 26 . 12: Any human-caused events that could threaten the survival of intelligent life from overpopulation, to a nuclear winter, to a stray garbage scow entering planetary orbit.

Novel Sci-fi Concept 56 . 114 . 138

These themes explore futuristic technologies and the implications of scientifically plausible alternate laws of nature.

- AI Technology** 19 . 28 . 6: Any technology relating to machines that are able to perform tasks that normally require humanoid intelligence from androids, to nanomachines, to simulated personalities.
- Alternate Laws of Nature** 13 . 19 . 5: Alternate laws of nature that while exotic, fall within the realm of what is thought to be logically possible such as time travel to name one example.
- Fictional Gadget** 3 . 13 . 53: Anything from a tricorder, to a tractor beam, to a sonic razor.
- Human Enhancement** 4 . 5 . 17: Technologies designed to allow people to overcome disabilities and even the limitations of the healthy humanoid body from a mobile life support box, to artificial vision, to disembodiment of the brain itself.

Novel Alien Concept 54 . 164 . 54

Aliens that run the spectrum from bacteria-like organisms all the way to transcendental beings

- Mega-scale Engineering Project** 5 . 12 . 13: A form of engineering concerned with the construction structures either on an enormous scale like a Dyson sphere or in presently inaccessible locations like a space library.
- Mind Technology** 4 . 12 . 9: Any technology relating to the mind from a memory wipe device to mind-computer merging.
- Real Gadget** 0 . 1 . 9: Gadgets that were in the realm of sci-fi when depicted in the show, but have since been invented in real life, like flatscreen TVs and voice recognition technology.
- Starship Technology** 2 . 5 . 7: Any number of novel starship designs and the particular technologies they are based on, including even a starship that can fly within solid matter.

Novel Alien Concept 54 . 164 . 54

Aliens that run the spectrum from bacteria-like organisms all the way to transcendental beings

- Wacky Sci-fi Concept** 5 . 18 . 10: Anything from a kill button, to matter transmutation, to a life force draining headband.
- What's Out There?** 2 . 8 . 39: Exotic astronomical phenomena such as black holes, space auroras, and even a trinary star system with a habitable planet.
- Inhabitable Environment Dwelling Life Form** 0 . 0 . 4: These aliens live in environments that are inhospitable to humanoids, including the atmosphere of a gas giant, bedrock, not to mention ooze.

Novel Alien Concept 54 . 164 . 54

Aliens that run the spectrum from bacteria-like organisms all the way to transcendental beings

- Biologically Distinguished Life Form** 2 . 5 . 3: Anything from aliens with novel mating practices, to aliens with unusual metabolisms, to bilaterally colored aliens.
- Culturally Distinguished Life Form** 5 . 46 . 9: In many instances the alien culture is modeled on a normal human behavior taken to the extreme, such as avarice (Ferengi) or ruthlessness (Romulans).
- Earth-life Inspired Life Form** 2 . 6 . 10: These aliens are patterned on the animal and plant life of earth.
- Inorganic Life Form** 1 . 12 . 4: These non-carbon based life forms have biochemistries based on anything from silicon, to electromagnetic waves, to swirls of ionized gas.

The Pursuit of Knowledge

Ideas about thought, belief, and reason. These themes concern how the world is and how we ought to act in it; they range over anything real that is in the domain of human investigation.



The Domain of Man 27 . 79 . 104

These themes comprise a constellation of aspects of the human experience that draw from both basic human nature and our shared cultural heritage.

- Human Nature** 18 . 31 . 32: Distinguishing characteristics that members of the human species share in common more or less independently of the influence of culture.
- The Arts** 0 . 0 . 24: A broad range of art forms from painting, to poetry, to sculpture, to calligraphy, to tap dancing, to stand up comedy.
- The Art of War** 4 . 7 . 22: Themes pertaining to military strategy and battle tactics.

The Domain of Faith 11 . 31 . 24

These themes pertain to beliefs about religion and the supernatural.

- Mysticism** 9 . 20 . 17: A collection of arcane practices and beliefs related to the supernatural from shamanism to seances.
- Organized Religion** 3 . 14 . 8: Doctrines and practices that tend to fall under the domain of organized religion from beliefs about the afterlife to the coming of the end of the world.

The Domain of Reason 42 . 97 . 111

These themes pertain to the making sense of the world by means of logic and observation.

- Philosophy** 40 . 84 . 41: Themes concerning the study of general and fundamental problems concerning ethics, knowledge, existence, mind, being, and the very nature of reality.
- Science** 2 . 16 . 74: Themes concerning the systematic enterprise that builds and organizes knowledge into the form of testable explanations and predictions about the universe that we call science.

The Domain of Anti-reason 9 . 15 . 12

These themes pertain to theories about nature and reality that can only be maintained by the abandonment of reason.

- Crackpot Theory** 9 . 13 . 8: Theories that are presented as scientific, but do not in fact adhere to accepted scientific standards from the Bermuda Triangle, to flying saucers, to the idea that the devil was really an alien.
- Falsified Scientific Theory** 0 . 5 . 20: A collection of theories that were at one time accepted as plausible descriptions of reality, but have since been disproven from ESP, to phrenology, to the four elements.

The Domain of Anti-reason 9 . 15 . 12

These themes pertain to theories about nature and reality that can only be maintained by the abandonment of reason.

- Mentally Distinguished Life Form** 4 . 29 . 13: Anything from ultra-rational aliens (Vulcans), to telepaths, to hive minds.
- Miscellaneous Life Form** 8 . 11 . 2: Examples include two-dimensional beings, shapeshifters, microscopic sentient life forms, and of course those soft and cuddly tribbles.
- Parasitic Life Form** 2 . 9 . 2: Most of these aliens subsist on humanoid energy in one way or another.
- Space Stereotype** 10 . 14 . 3: Anything from space Romans, to space hippies, to space Irish, to space Native Americans, to space pirates, to space Catholics.
- Spaceborne Life Form** 3 . 9 . 1: These life forms exist naturally in outer space and are typically very large in size. Perhaps the most iconic life form of this variety is the giant space amoeba.
- Superior Life Form** 12 . 33 . 5: These life forms clearly transcend humans in either knowledge, morality, or mastery of the laws of nature.