

Name: _____

Our Moon

By Cynthia Sherwood



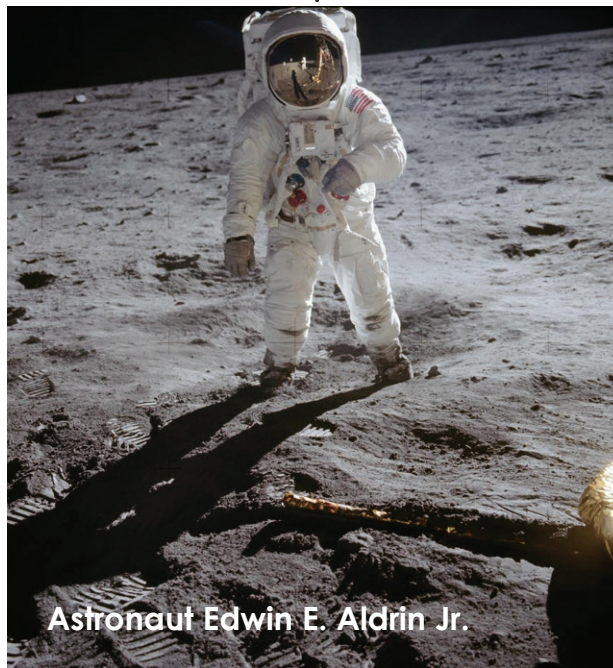
Jupiter and Saturn have more than ninety moons each. Neptune has fourteen. Mars has two. But if somebody says “the moon,” we know exactly what they’re talking about. It’s Earth’s moon, our closest neighbor in outer space.

The moon is the second brightest spot in the sky, after the sun. It orbits around the Earth once a month, going through “lunar phases.” Sometimes the moon will look like a skinny, curved sliver called a “crescent.” Later, it becomes a glowing full moon. These phases are caused by the changing angles of where the Earth, moon, and sun are relative to one another.

The moon might be the closest thing to us in space, but it’s still far, far away—about a quarter of a million miles away! It’s also much smaller. About fifty moons could fit inside Earth. Temperatures can be extreme—as hot as 250°F or as cold as

minus 250°F.

That’s why astronauts had to wear special space suits when they first landed on the moon. Besides protecting them from the extreme temperatures, the suits provided enough oxygen for the astronauts to breathe.



Astronaut Edwin E. Aldrin Jr.

July 20, 1969 is one of the most important dates in history. It’s when America’s Apollo 11 astronauts landed on the moon. The first man to walk on the moon was Neil Armstrong. Right afterward, he said some of the most famous words ever: “That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.”

You might ask your parents, grandparents, or teachers where they were when we first landed on the moon. If they were born and weren’t too young, they’ll remember. Life has never been quite the same here on Earth now that we’ve explored our closest neighbor in space.

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1. The moon is about ...

- a. 500,000 miles from Earth
- b. 250,000 miles from Earth
- c. 25,000 miles from Earth
- d. 100,000 miles from Earth

2. What famous words did Neil Armstrong say when he first stepped on the moon?

3. According to the information in the article, name two reasons astronauts who landed on the moon needed to wear special space suits.

4. Chelsea's mom was born in 1968. When Chelsea asked her mom where she was when Neil Armstrong first landed on the moon, her mom said, "I'm not sure."

Why do you think Chelsea's mom said this?

- a. Chelsea's mom wasn't born yet.
- b. Television had not been invented yet.
- c. Chelsea's mom was too old to remember it.
- d. Chelsea's mom was too young to remember it.

5. Which statement is true?

- a. Saturn has fewer moons than Mars.
- b. Earth has more moons than Neptune.
- c. Neptune has fewer moons than Jupiter.
- d. Mars has more moons than any other planet.

ANSWER KEY

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