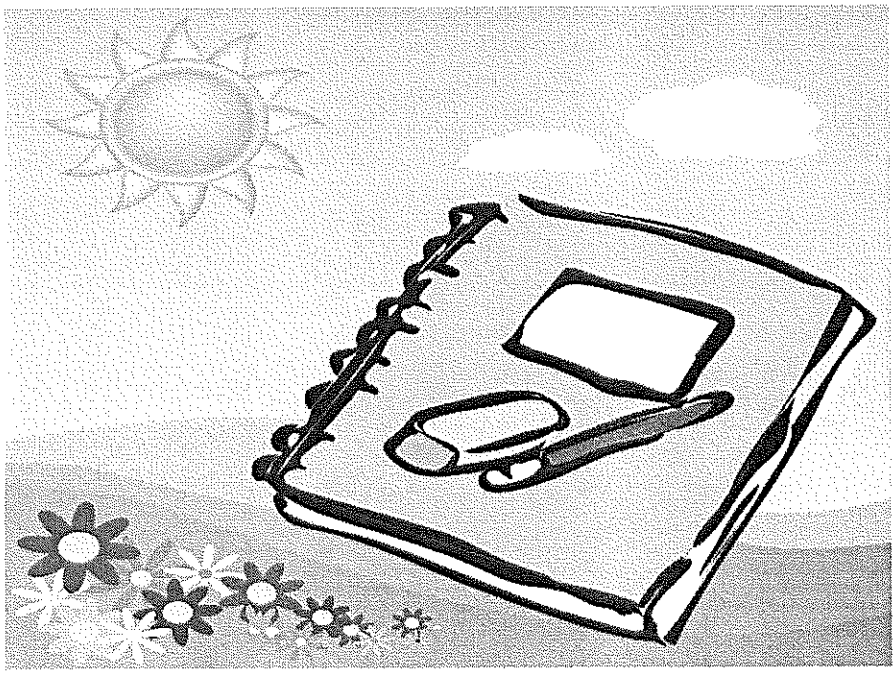
GRADE 4



2024 SUMMER PACKET

COMMONLIT

Name: _____ Class: _____

Minecraft: More Than a Game?

By Tracy Vonder Brink
2023

Minecraft was created in 2011 and has since become the best-selling video game of all time. In this informational text, author Tracy Vonder Brink explains what makes Minecraft special.

As you read, take notes on what makes Minecraft special.

[1] Picture playing in a sandbox when you were little, where you were free to build whatever you wanted. Now picture a simple idea like this turning into one of the most popular video games of all time. Between 2 to 3 million people play Minecraft every day. It's played in the United States, China, Germany, Brazil, and in many other countries. Minecraft is fun, but some feel that what makes it so popular is that it's much more than just another video game. Let's look at some of the reasons why this game is special.

"Untitled" by Mika Baumeister is licensed under CC0.

It May Make You More Creative[1]

Minecraft is called a "sandbox game" because its players can create their own world within the game. It's a bit like when you used your imagination in the sandbox. Minecraft is an open world where you can explore and create anything you can imagine. That's especially true in the game's Creative Mode,[2] where nothing can hurt your character and you have everything you need to build freely.

In 2019, a study done at Iowa State University found that playing Minecraft may make players more creative. In the study, 352 students either played Minecraft, watched a TV show, or played a racecar video game. After 40 minutes of screen time, they were asked to do four activities[3] that tested their creativity. Players who had used Minecraft's Creative Mode scored higher on

1. **able to make or do something new or with imagination**
2. a way of doing something
3. **Activity** *(noun)* actions of a particular kind

the tests than the other students. That may be because the Minecraft players were able to use their imaginations in the game. So, it's possible that being creative in Minecraft transfers to real life. But more studies would need to be done to see if that's true.

Teachers Love It, Too

"With something as open-ended as Minecraft, I'm a firm believer that you could teach any subject with this game," says Joel Levin, who is nicknamed "The Minecraft Teacher" because he loves using the game in his class so much. Schools usually don't want kids to play video games, but Minecraft is different. Teachers are using the game to teach everything from math to history to computer coding.[4] Students often seem to learn better during these lessons because playing Minecraft doesn't seem like work. Teachers have also found that completing a Minecraft project in a group helps students learn to work together.

[5] In 2016, the company that owns the game launched a special edition[5] just for schools. It has a website where teachers can find lessons to use in their classrooms. For example, one lesson lets kids explore frozen worlds to learn what Earth's cold habitats[6] are like. Books have also been written about how to learn coding in Minecraft. So, even if a school doesn't use the game in class, kids can find those kinds of books in a library and learn on their own.

It Can Help Change the World

In Minecraft, players can design and build houses, castles, cities and more. Now some countries are using Minecraft's in-game building to help people improve where they live in the real world. In 2012, the United Nations[7] and the company that owns Minecraft formed a group called Block by Block. The group runs workshops in communities[8] that want to improve their public spaces by building places such as parks and playgrounds. The workshops use Minecraft to help local[9] kids design what they might like to see in a public space. Then the kids present their ideas to community leaders. It's a way to give everyone a voice in improving where they live.

Communities can also apply to have Block by Block help pay for and build their projects. That

4. Computer coding is the process of changing ideas, solutions, and instructions into the language that the computer can understand.
5. **Edition** *(noun)* a certain book, magazine, newspaper, or video game that is made at one time
6. the natural home of an animal or plant
7. a group of many nations that work towards world-wide peace and creating friendships among countries
8. **Community** *(noun)* a group of people who live close together
9. **Local** *(adjective)* people from a particular area, city, or town

means that a project that started in a kid's imagination in Minecraft might be built in the real world! So far, Block by Block has run workshops and helped build projects in more than 35 countries.

Players often grow bored by the same game after a while, but Minecraft has been around for 10 years and is still growing. Creativity, in-school learning, and using it in real life make Minecraft different from many other games. Today, you can even find t-shirts, plushies, and other toys based on its most popular characters. Allowing people to create whatever they want in an open world keeps them coming back for more.

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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. What is the main idea of the text?
    A. There are many pros and cons of playing Minecraft.
    B. Video games are the most important invention of our time.
    C. Minecraft can help people and communities learn and grow.
    D. People who play video games are smarter than those who do not.

2. Which statement from the article shares an opinion about Minecraft?
    A. "Picture playing in a sandbox when you were little, where you were free to build whatever you wanted." (Paragraph 1)
    B. "352 students either played Minecraft, watched a TV show, or played a racecar video game." (Paragraph 3)
    C. "'I'm a firm believer that you could teach any subject with this game,' says Joel Levin, who is nicknamed 'The Minecraft Teacher' because he loves using the game in his class so much." (Paragraph 4)
    D. "Teachers are using the game to teach everything from math to history to computer coding." (Paragraph 4)

3. How does paragraph 3 support the author's main points?
    A. It explains that Minecraft is helpful in making communities stronger.
    B. It shows that playing Minecraft might be a good way to improve learning.
    C. It shows that playing Minecraft has been proven to make students smarter.
    D. It explains that Minecraft is being used in many different kinds of experiments.

4. What is the meaning of the word "launched" as it is used in paragraph 5 of the text?
    A. sent up
    B. removed
    C. held onto
    D. introduced

5. How does the author support the claim that Minecraft is "more than just another video game"? (Paragraph 1)

Discussion Questions

Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. Many people enjoy playing video games like Minecraft. How do shared interests bring people together? What hobbies or activities do you like to do with others?

2. Do you play video games? What types of games do you like to play? How would you like to see video games used in the classroom or other parts of society?

3. The author of the text presents reasons why Minecraft is important. Do you think technology is important? What are some of the positive outcomes of using technology? What are some of the negative outcomes of using technology?

4. Video games like Minecraft are often played alone or online with friends. Do you think friendships can be as strong online as they are in person? Why or why not?

COMMONLIT

Name: _____ Class: _____

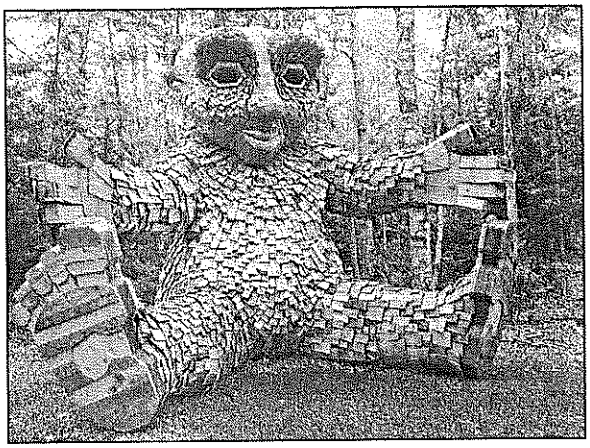
The Troll Maker

By Gail Skroback Hennessey
2021

People often discard, or throw away, things that are no longer useful to them. In this text, an artist has an unusual idea to address the world's trash problem.

As you read, take notes on Thomas Dambo's solution to the trash problem.

[1] Thomas Dambo, an environmental[1] artist in Denmark, thinks big. In 2010, he started his first large-scale project: building birdhouses. He and his crew ended up creating 4,000 of them. Now he makes giant trolls. So far, 59 trolls can be found at locations all around the world.



"Lilja" by Ollie Jones is licensed under CC0.

His creations are made entirely from items people have thrown away, such as discarded wooden pallets, old fencing, and broken sheds. It's important to him that he doesn't add to the growing landfills on our planet. He thinks of discarded items as art supplies and a source of inspiration.[2]

Thomas recently took some time to talk about how his childhood set him on a path toward the work he does now.

Treasure Hunting

As a kid, I wanted to build all sorts of things, from a skateboard ramp to a castle or tree house in my backyard. I had lots of energy[3] and creativity.[4] The problem was that a kid doesn't have the money to purchase supplies. I started to bike around the neighborhood looking for

1. having to do with the natural world
2. something that gives someone an idea
3. **Energy** ***(noun)*** a feeling of power
4. the skill to make or do something new or with imagination

discarded wood, rope, and other items that I could use to create things.

[5] In 7th grade, a girl in my class gave me a good piece of advice. She told me I should take a different route each day to experience something new. I took her idea and learned all about my city of Copenhagen, Denmark.

Today, I still use this idea of taking different routes as I search for trash left out on curbs. Items such as wire, ropes, wooden pallets, metal, old chair rollers, and plastic containers are just waiting for me to think of a way to use them. If the items are small, I use "Tingfinder," my bicycle with a cart attached, to take home my "treasures." I use a truck for the larger items.

Endless Possibilities[5]

When I was in school, we had a milk break. The containers had a plastic top. I realized that, every single week, 500 kids used 2,500 plastic tops! I started asking if I could have the plastic tops. What could I do with them? Make a big mosaic? A plastic snake? A large necklace? The possibilities were endless.

Look at something and think not what it is but what it could become. You can build all sorts of things from stuff that would be discarded. Be part of the solution by playing with things that don't create more trash.

A Dream Life

Trolls play an important role in Danish folklore. I used to listen to a lot of audiobooks set in the Scandinavian fairy-tale universe. I like fairy tales because you can dream yourself into a world where anything can happen.

[10] I've always liked magic, trolls, nature, and travel. I've always liked to build big things with recycled objects. All of these interests have combined into the perfect job for me.

My advice is to think about what you really love to do and let that guide you. Keep moving in the direction you'd like to go.

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5. something that may happen

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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. Which alternate title best expresses the main idea of the article?
    A. Milk Top Mosaics
    B. Finders Keepers, Losers Weepers
    C. Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them
    D. One Man's Trash is Another Man's Treasure

2. How does the author organize the information in the text?
    A. by sharing details about the different troll sculptures Thomas Dambo has made
    B. by explaining how Thomas Dambo's early life made him who he is today
    C. by showing why trash is such a large problem in our world today
    D. by helping the reader picture what the troll art looks like

3. Which detail from the article helps the reader understand that Thomas Dambo thinks differently than most other people?
    A. "As a kid, I wanted to build all sorts of things, from a skateboard ramp to a castle or tree house in my backyard." (Paragraph 4)
    B. "I took her idea and learned all about my city of Copenhagen, Denmark." (Paragraph 5)
    C. "I realized that, every single week, 500 kids used 2,500 plastic tops! I started asking if I could have the plastic tops." (Paragraph 7)
    D. "I like fairy tales because you can dream yourself into a world where anything can happen." (Paragraph 9)

4. Which of the following best describes how Thomas Dambo sees trash differently from most others?
    A. While others see trash as a problem to fix, Thomas Dambo sees it as a good thing.
    B. While others are throwing trash away, Thomas Dambo tries not to make any trash.
    C. When others think something is trash, Thomas Dambo thinks that it could still be useful.
    D. When others care about the things they throw away, Thomas Dambo sees trash as a problem.

5. How does Thomas Dambo's work show that he is "part of the solution" to the trash problem (Paragraph 8)?

Discussion Questions

Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. Thomas Dambo tells us to "look at something and think not what it is but what it could become." Look around your school or classroom and find something that might be considered "trash." Then, use your imagination to think about all of the things that this piece of trash could become. As a creative extension, make a piece of art out of the "trash" that you find. Afterwards, reflect on how making something out of trash pushed you to think creatively.

2. The author shares that "it's important to him that he doesn't add to the growing landfills on our planet." Besides creating art from trash, what are some other things that we can do to make sure that we are not adding more and more trash to our landfills? How can actions like Dambo's help the environment? In your opinion are actions like this enough, or should more be done to protect the environment? Why?

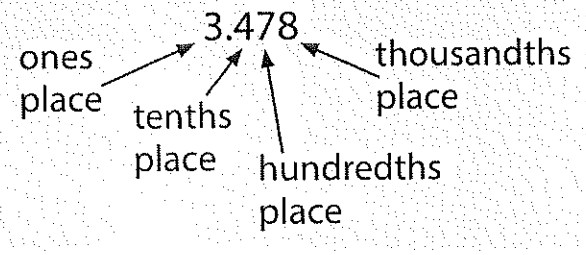
3. Thomas Dambo shares that "my advice is to think about what you really love to do and let that guide you." What is something that you love to do? How could you use what you really love to help you find a job that is perfect for you, as Dambo says?

Name _____ Date _____

Skill Builder: Round Decimals

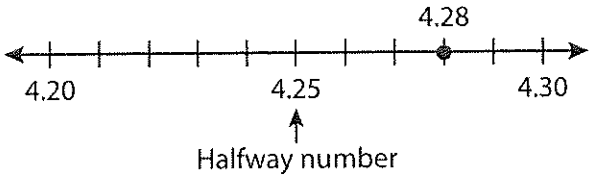
Concept Review

A **decimal** is a number with one or more digits to the right of the decimal point.



Example

Use the number line to round 4.28 to the nearest tenth.



4.28 is closer to 4.3 than to 4.2.

▶ So, 4.28 rounded to the nearest tenth is **4.3** .

Use place value to round 3.562 to the nearest whole number.

ones place — 5 = 5, so round up.

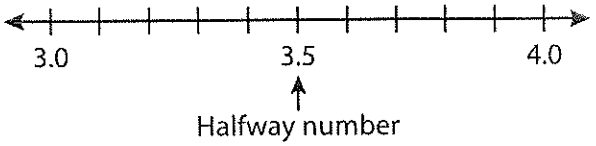
3.562

4

▶ So, 3.562 rounded to the nearest whole number is **4** .

Try It

Use the number line to round 3.37 to the nearest whole number.



3.37 is closer to _____ than to _____.

▶ So, 3.37 rounded to the nearest whole number is _____.

Use place value to round 3.562 to the nearest hundredth.

hundredths place — 2 < 5

3.562

3.5

▶ So, 3.562 rounded to the nearest hundredth is _____.

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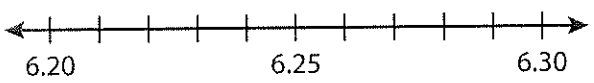
Name _____ Date _____

Skill Builder: Round Decimals

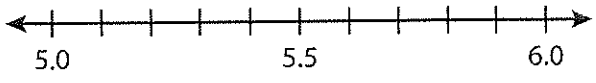
Practice

Round the number to the place of the underlined digit.

1. 6.2̲9



2. 5̲.18



3. 5.5̲2

4. 3.2̲82

5. 4̲.098

6. 7.3̲76

7. 8.60̲5

8. 6.1̲90

9. 16.15̲7

10. 2̲8.342

11. Round 0.24 to the nearest tenth.

12. Round 4.836 to the nearest hundredth.

13. Round 2.93 to the nearest whole number.

14. Round 0.137 to the nearest tenth.

15. Round 1.372.

Nearest whole number:

Nearest tenth:

Nearest hundredth:

16. Round 9.816.

Nearest whole number:

Nearest tenth:

Nearest hundredth:

17. You have $6.78. Round the amount to the nearest whole number.

$

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Name _____ Date _____

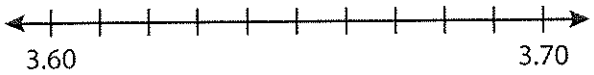
Skill Builder: Round Decimals

Quick Check

I can use place value to round decimals.

Round the number to the place of the underlined digit.

1. 3.$\underline{6}$5



2. 4.5$\underline{3}$6

3. Round 6.718 to the nearest tenth.

4. Round 15.725 to the nearest hundredth.

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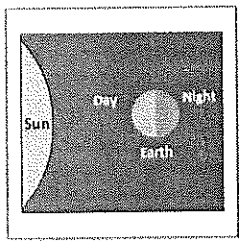
eduSmart

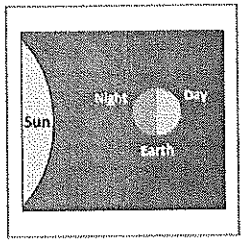
Student Reviews
Day and Night Cycle & Orbits and Rotations

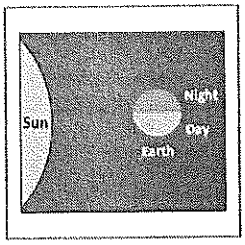
Day and Night Cycle

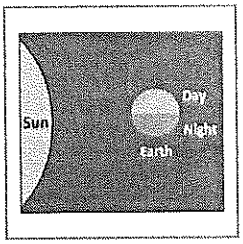
1. What causes the Sun to appear to move across the sky from East to West every day?
   a. The Sun going around Earth
   b. Earth orbiting the Sun
   c. Earth rotating on its axis
   d. The moon rising at night

2. Which of these diagrams models the occurrence of day and night?

A 

B 

C 

D 

3. Which of these cycles is NOT a result of Earth's rotation?
   a. Occurrence of day and night
   b. Occurrence of seasons
   c. Apparent movement of the Sun across the sky
   d. The Sun appearing to rise in the East

Orbits and Rotations

1. The half of Earth that faces the Sun experiences daytime and the other half experiences nighttime. Which of the following movements causes day and night on Earth?
   a. The rotation of the Sun
   b. The rotation of Earth on its axis
   c. The orbit of Earth around the Sun
   d. The orbit of the Moon around Earth

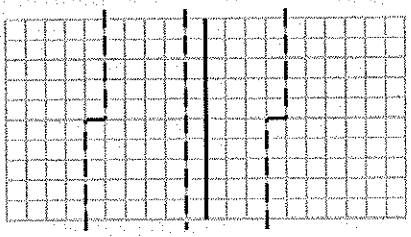
2. Fill in the correct season for each position.
   Position A: _____
   Position B: _____
   Position C: _____
   Position D: _____

3. Which two of the following are true when we witness a full Moon?
   a. The Moon revolves around Earth
   b. Earth revolves around the Moon
   c. Earth is between the Sun and the Moon
   d. The Moon is between the Sun and Earth

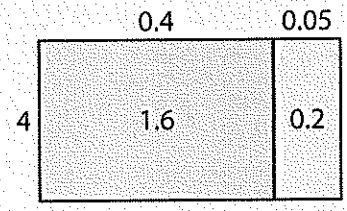
Name _____ Date _____

Skill Builder: Use Strategies to Divide Decimals

Concept Review



$1.8 \div 4 = 0.45$



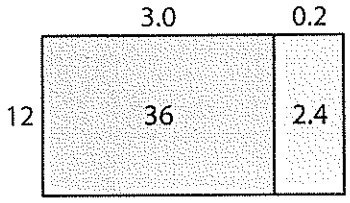
Example

Find the quotient: 38.4 ÷ 12.

One Way: Use partial quotients.

$$\begin{array}{r} 12\overline{)\,38.4} \\ -\ \mathbf{36} \quad \div 12 = \mathbf{3} \\ \hline 2.4 \\ -\ \mathbf{2.4} \quad \div 12 = \mathbf{0.2} \\ \hline 0 \qquad\quad \mathbf{3.2} \end{array}$$

Another Way: Use a model.



▶ So, $38.4 \div 12 =$ **3.2** .

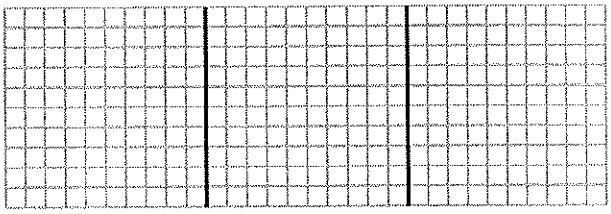
Try It!

Find the quotient: 2.6 ÷ 5.

One Way: Use partial quotients.

$$\begin{array}{r} 5\overline{)\,2.6} \\ -\ \quad \div 5 = \\ \hline 0.1 \\ -\ \quad \div 5 = \\ \hline 0 \end{array}$$

Another Way: Use a model.



▶ So, $2.6 \div 5 =$.

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Name _____ Date _____

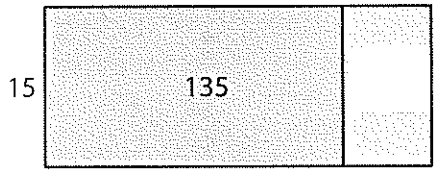
Skill Builder: Use Strategies to Divide Decimals

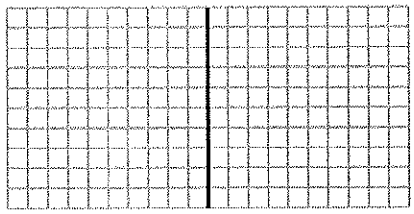
Practice

Find the quotient.

1. $142.5 \div 15 =$ ____

2. $1.8 \div 3 =$ ____





3. $10.4 \div 4 =$ ____

$$\begin{array}{r} 4\overline{)10.4} \\ -\ \_\_\_\_ \\ \hline 2.4 \\ -\ \_\_\_\_ \\ \hline 0 \end{array}$$

$\div 4 =$ ____

$\div 4 =$ ____

4. $134.4 \div 16 =$ ____

$$\begin{array}{r} 16\overline{)134.4} \\ -\ \_\_\_\_ \\ \hline 6.4 \\ -\ \_\_\_\_ \\ \hline 0 \end{array}$$

$\div 16 =$ ____

$\div 16 =$ ____

5. $6.3 \div 3 =$ ____

6. $70.8 \div 12 =$ ____

7. $113.4 \div 18 =$ ____

8. $1.5 \div 0.5 =$ ____

Find the missing number.

9. ____ $\div 28 = 1.8$

10. $86.4 \div$ ____ $= 16$

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Name _____ Date _____

Skill Builder: Use Strategies to Divide Decimals

Quick Check

I can understand dividing decimals.

Find the quotient.

1. $3.4 \div 2 =$

2. $32.2 \div 14 =$

3. $184.8 \div 21 =$

4. $31.4 \div 0.1 =$

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Name _____ Date _____

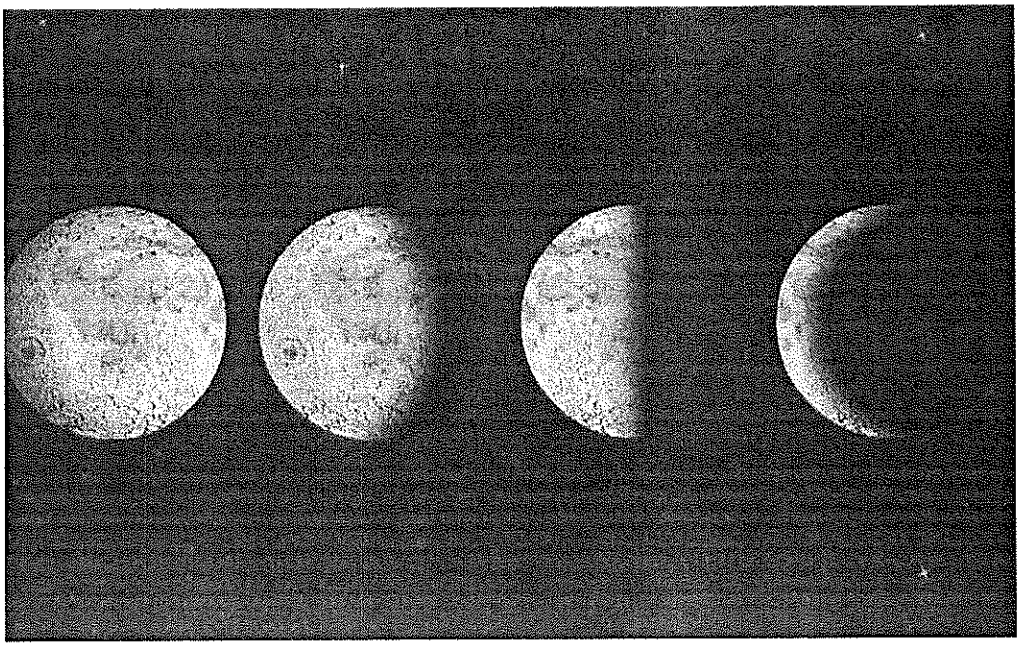
Phases of the Moon

By: Milt Huling, PhD. & Alison SMith

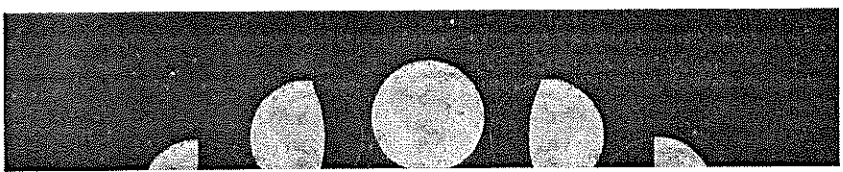
For centuries, astronomers studied the patterns in the sky. They understood the Sun provided light. When it is in the sky, we refer to this time as daytime. During the night, astronomers saw tiny points of light. When the Sun was not in the sky, these points of light were visible. When the Sun was in the sky, the tiny points of light could not be seen. We now know these points of lights as stars and planets.

There was one other object that astronomers found curious. It provided some light to the night sky. Its pattern was different from the Sun. Night after night, it appeared to change shape. It rose and set at different times. Some nights, it was absent from the night sky. Other times, it could be seen in the daytime. What was this curious object? Of course, it is our Moon, Luna.

We now know the Moon does not produce any light of its own. It only reflects light from the Sun. As the Moon orbits Earth, we see different amounts of sunlight reflected off the Moon. The Moon appears to change from completely dark to fully lit and back to completely dark again. These changes are called phases of the Moon.



The New Moon phase occurs when the entire side of the Moon facing Earth is dark or unlit by the Sun. This happens when the Moon is between Earth and the Sun. As the Moon revolves around Earth, the Moon starts to show a little bit of the reflected light from the Sun.

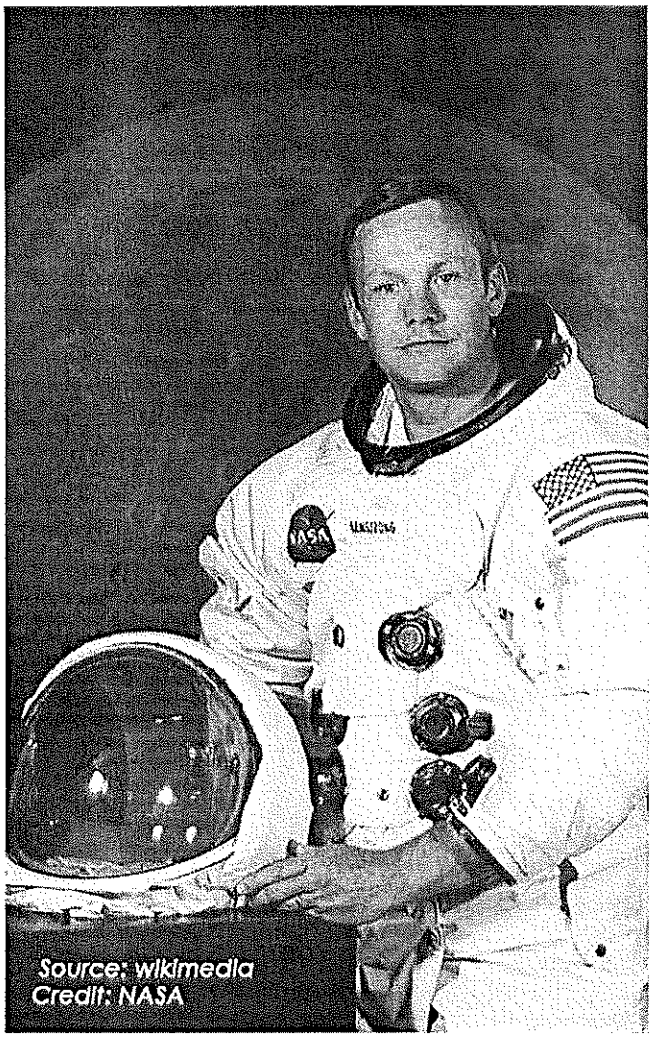


By the end of one week, about half of the Moon looks like it is lit. This

makes the Moon look like a half circle. This is called the First Quarter phase of the Moon. By the end of the second week, we see sunlight reflecting off the entire part of the Moon that is facing Earth, making the Moon look like a full circle. This is the Full Moon phase.

By the end of the third week, the Third Quarter phase occurs. Half the Moon looks like it is lit, and it again looks like a half circle. The New Moon returns by the end of the fourth week and the cycle starts all over again.

Much of what we know about the Moon's motion was learned many centuries ago. Recently, scientists have learned even more. In 1969, Neil Armstrong became the first man to walk on the Moon. He and his fellow astronaut, Buzz Aldrin, spent almost an entire day on the Moon's surface. During their brief time on the Moon, they explored and collected samples from the surface. In total, there were five manned missions that landed on the Moon. The first was in 1969 and the last was in 1972. Until manned missions went to the Moon, little was known about the Moon's geology or its formation.



Source: wikimedia
Credit: NASA

With the soil and rock samples collected, scientists could study what the Moon was made of. And it was not made of cheese! They were also able to create a theory about the Moon's formation. Scientists continue to study the Moon. There is even talk about going back to the Moon to do more research. It would seem our closest neighbor in space may still have a few secrets.

Phases of the Moon

1. If the Moon looks full tonight, what do you predict the Moon will look like in a week?

   A. The Moon will still look full.
   B. The Moon will look like a half circle.
   C. The Moon will look completely dark.

D. We cannot predict what the Moon will look like.

2. Why were the rocks collected during manned missions to the Moon helpful to scientists? Select all that apply.

   A. They helped scientists learn what the Moon was made of.
   B. They helped scientists understand that life can exist on the Moon.
   C. They helped scientists create a theory about how the Moon was formed.
   D. They helped scientists earn a lot of money to fund other science experiments.

3. Why do we see different phases of the moon?

   A. Because the Moon rotates on its axis
   B. Because the Moon revolves around Earth
   C. Because Earth revolves around the Moon
   D. Because the Moon revolves around the Sun

4. True or False:
   The New Moon phase occurs when the Moon reflects very little light from the Sun.
   - True
   - False

5. How can you tell the difference between a First Quarter Moon and a Third Quarter Moon?

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[redacted]

[redacted]