

A photograph of the Earth from the Moon, taken from the Apollo 11 Command module Columbia spacecraft in 1969.



EXERCISES IN
Work It Out!

The Moon

Da miliardi di anni la Luna illumina la Terra di notte. Questo satellite muove gli oceani e ci aiuta a misurare il tempo. Dal primo allunaggio, solo 12 persone hanno messo piede sulla sua superficie.

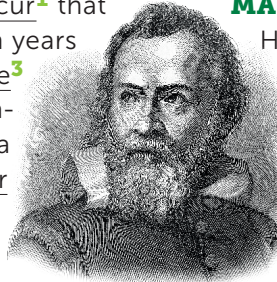
PRE-INTERMEDIATE **A2**

ON CD **3**

GLOSSARY

- 1 **to concur:** concordare
- 2 **around:** circa
- 3 **size:** grandezza
- 4 **to collide:** entrare in collisione
- 5 **greater than:** più grande di
- 6 **luckily:** fortunatamente
- 7 **to circle:** girare intorno
- 8 **acting as:** facendo da
- 9 **mirror:** specchio
- 10 **light:** luce
- 11 **tides:** maree
- 12 **neighbour:** vicino
- 13 **shy:** timido
- 14 **however:** tuttavia
- 15 **in sync:** sincronizzate
- 16 **space race:** corsa allo spazio
- 17 **to reach:** raggiungere
- 18 **first:** per primi
- 19 **thousands:** migliaia
- 20 **to measure:** misurare
- 21 **cave paintings:** pitture rupestri
- 22 **even:** persino
- 23 **survey:** inchiesta
- 24 **to think:** pensare

Many scientists concur¹ that around² 4.5 billion years ago an object the size³ of Mars collided⁴ with our planet. The energy produced was a hundred million times greater than⁵ the impact of the asteroid that caused the extinction of the dinosaurs sixty-five million years ago. Luckily⁶ for us, the result was the Moon.



MAN IN THE MOON

Humans have looked up at the celestial body for thousands¹⁹ of years. Many saw a human face, 'the Man in the Moon'. In 1609, Galileo used a new invention, the telescope, to make the first observations of space, including the Moon. His discoveries supported the idea that the Sun, and not the Earth, was the centre of the Universe.

HOME SWEET HOME

Our only natural satellite circles⁷ our planet at a distance of 385,000 kilometres. The Moon makes the Earth a more habitable home. Acting as⁸ a mirror⁹ for the Sun, it gives us light¹⁰. Its gravity also causes tides¹¹, creating a rhythm that has 'guided' humans for thousands of years.

THE DARK SIDE

Our friendly neighbour¹² is shy¹³, however¹⁴. The rotations of the Earth and the Moon are in sync¹⁵, so we only see one side of the Moon. Twelve men – all Americans – walked on that side between 1969 and 1972. The 'Space Race'¹⁶ – the race between the USA and Russia to reach¹⁷ the Moon first¹⁸ – was part of the Cold War. This 'war' dominated global politics for decades.

INFLUENCING MANKIND

The Moon has influenced cultures around the world for millennia. Many civilisations have measured²⁰ time using lunar calendars, creating 28-day months. There are paleolithic cave paintings²¹ of the Moon's phases.

CELESTIAL CHEESE

Even²² today, the Moon is a mystery for many people. In a survey²³ in 1988 by the Lowell Observatory of Flagstaff, Arizona, 13 per cent of the respondents thought²⁴ that the Moon was made of cheese! ☒



Top 5

Earth's Neighbour

La Luna è una costante in tutte le culture del mondo. Da migliaia di anni è rappresentata in quadri, poesie, leggende e canzoni popolari. Eppure non sappiamo ancora molto del corpo celeste più importante del nostro sistema solare dopo il Sole.

1 The Moon is not a sphere

It is actually egg-shaped¹. When we look at it, we are looking at one of the small ends²! It is also wonky³ — its centre of mass is not exactly in the geometric centre — perhaps because of so many asteroid collisions.

2 We never see all the Moon

The most⁴ we can ever see is 59 per cent. If we were on the lunar surface⁵, in the other 41 per cent, we could never see the Earth, our home. *Dark Side of the Moon*, by Pink Floyd, is one of the most famous LPs of all time.

3 The Moon was almost destroyed by Man!

During the Cold War, the Americans considered⁶ exploding a nuclear bomb on the Moon. The idea was to show⁷ the Russians just who was the boss ... on the Earth and in the stars!

4 Our neighbour is making us slower

The presence of the Moon is reducing the speed⁸ of the Earth's rotation. In the last hundred years, our planet has slowed⁹ by 1.4 milliseconds. Our days will gain¹⁰ a second in 50,000 years. No need¹¹ to reset¹² our watches yet!

5 In the shadow of the Sun

The Sun is fourteen times brighter¹³ than the full moon. For a full moon to shine¹⁴ with the same brightness as the Sun, you would need 398,100 Moons! That is a lot of collisions! ☒



Apollo 15 commander David R. Scott salutes from the Moon in 1971.



PRE-INTERMEDIATE A2

GLOSSARY

- 1 **egg-shaped:** a forma di uovo
- 2 **ends:** estremità
- 3 **wonky:** sbilenca
- 4 **the most:** la maggior parte
- 5 **surface:** superficie
- 6 **to consider:** tenere conto
- 7 **to show:** mostrare
- 8 **speed:** velocità
- 9 **to slow:** rallentare
- 10 **to gain:** guadagnare
- 11 **no need:** non serve, non c'è bisogno di
- 12 **to reset:** reimpostare
- 13 **brighter:** più brillante, luminoso
- 14 **to shine:** brillare, risplendere