

THE MOON

- The Moon is Earth's closest neighbor in space.
- The Moon does not make its own light.
- The Moon reflects the light of the Sun.
- Moonlight is really reflected sunlight!
- Large rocks called meteoroids made many of the Moon's craters. Most of the Moon's surface is covered with craters.
- These craters are hollow areas or pits in the surface.
- Like the Sun, the Moon seems to rise and set. The Sun does not move around the Earth, but the Moon does.
- As the Earth revolves around the Sun, the Moon revolves around Earth. It completes one orbit around the Earth in just over 29 days. This is almost as long as a month. In fact, some of the earliest calendars were based on the Moon's motion.
- As the Moon orbits Earth, its appearance seems to change. The apparent shapes of the Moon in the sky are called moon phases. During one complete orbit, the Moon cycles through all of its phases. At the same time, the Moon completes about one rotation.
- All this time, the Sun is shining. It lights one half of the Moon at a time. The other half is dark. During the Moon's orbits, we see different fractions of its lighted half.
- The Moon has gravity. It pulls slightly on Earth. On the side of Earth that faces the Moon, the water or the land bulges slightly outward. The Moon pulls more than the Sun because it is closer to Earth.
- The moon's gravity causes tides. Tides are the daily rise and fall of the ocean surface. Most coastal regions have high tides and low tides.