

PART 1

You are going to read an article about the birth of the moon. Choose the most suitable heading from the list (A-I) for each part (1-7) of the article. There is one extra heading which you do not need to use. There is an example at the beginning (0).

- A A lifeless place.
 B A stray planet.
 C Smashed by rocks.
 D The strangest of concepts.
 E Leaving the earth little by little.
 F A violent theory.
 G United as one?
 H 3,800 million years old.
 I Evidence that they were mistaken.

The Birth of the Moon

We all recognise it, but who knows how it got there?

0

D

Science fiction writers could not have dreamed up as strange an idea as the moon. Although it is earth's closest friend in space, it is completely foreign to us.

1

The moon has almost no colour but has huge areas of broken white rock that rise up from flat grey plains of lava. Although there are romantic names for these areas, such as the Sea of Tranquility, there are no seas and no oceans on the moon. There is also no air. The moon is indeed an empty place. While the side that we see is covered in dark plains, the other side is like a battlefield, full of craters.

2

Despite centuries of study, astronomers are still puzzled by our nearest neighbour. What created the plains and the craters? Where, in fact, did the moon come from? The great astronomer George Darwin realised that the moon was slowly moving away from the earth. He suggested that billions of years ago, the earth and the moon were once a single planet. He also thought that this single planet began to turn so fast that a section broke away and was thrown into space. That section then became the moon.

3

One of Darwin's theories has been confirmed, almost a century after he put it forward. When the Apollo astronauts reached the moon, they put special mirrors on the surface. Later they discovered that by using these mirrors to measure exact distances, the moon was moving away from the earth at a rate of four centimetres per year.

4

20th century astronomers, though, have come up with two other theories that oppose Darwin's. One possibility is that the earth and moon were born as neighbours, from different parts of a single cloud of gas and dust. Or perhaps the moon was once a planet in its own right, which lost its way and came so close to the earth that the increasing gravity of our planet captured it.

5

Astronomers waited anxiously for moon rocks to be brought back to earth so they could test these theories. In fact, they were all wrong! Although the moon is made of the same chemical matter as the earth, moon rocks have far less potassium, zinc and iron than the earth. So the moon could not have broken off from the earth - or have been formed from the same cloud of gas or dust. The moon is also so different from planets like Venus or Mars that it is unlikely to be part of another planetary system captured by the earth.

6

Some other clues, however, have led to a theory of a violent beginning for the moon - and astronomers have called it the Big Splash theory. They believe that the moon was created when another planet, about the size of Mars, crashed into the earth.

7

Scientists also believe that at some point in history the moon was repeatedly hit by large pieces of rock left over from the birth of the solar system. The largest ones blasted out holes up to 1,000 kilometres across. These holes created the markings which we now call the face of the Man in the Moon.

PART 2

You are going to read an article about an Italian village. For questions 8-15, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Although she doesn't know it yet, three-month-old Cecilia has a good chance of living at least 100 years. Not that her parents have discovered the secret to a long life - they just have the good fortune of being born in Campodimele, a small village of 850 people in Italy. The mayor of the village claims that few people die before the age of 85, and many live longer. His grandfather lived to 95, his grandmother to 97 and his aunt to 100. More than 90 people in the village are aged between 75 and 99 - such an astonishing number that the World Health Organisation sent scientists to the village to investigate. They discovered that the old people's cholesterol levels were lower than in newborn babies.

The oldest villager, at 99, thinks that hard work as well as taking regular exercise can help you live longer. A favourite activity among the older people is going to see the village chickens. A long street and steep paths lead from the village to dozens of stone chicken houses. Getting there can mean a good hour's walk and sometimes they do this twice a day. People also think that the villagers' easy-going nature and sense of emotional balance also helps. Nobody suffers from depression and old people don't get lonely because they live with their families. Life is unhurried, stress is unknown and traffic has been banned from the centre of the village.

During the study of the elderly in Campodimele, the researchers found that their blood pressure moved up and down far less than that of the majority of Italians. Stable blood pressure helps people live for a long time. But the study also looked at the children and grandchildren of the elderly and discovered that they also had much lower blood pressure than the average. This was confirmed by a group from the village who went to live in Canada in the 1960's. Their blood pressure was also low and this led the scientists to believe that the secret of why they live so long could be in the Campodimelans' genes. But this is not the whole answer.

In Campodimele, old people walk for at least two hours daily, eat at the same time each day, get up at dawn and go to bed at sunset. Baby Cecilia's 93-year-old great grandmother thinks that eating lots of spring onions is the key to a long life. She eats them raw, dressed with oil, vinegar and red pepper. Her grandson was so impressed with her recipes that he has opened a restaurant. The menu is very Mediterranean. There are lots fresh vegetables, beans, wild mushrooms, almost no butter and very little salt. The local speciality is a dish of peas which is often served with homemade pasta, followed by snails seasoned with pepper, mint and herbs: the perfect meal for celebrating your hundredth birthday.

8 What is it that Cecilia doesn't realise?

- A That there are lots of old people in Campodimele.
 B That her parents have discovered a secret.
 C That she will probably live for a long time.
 D That she is unfortunate to have been born in Campodimele.

9 What fact prompted the World Health Organisation investigation?

- A That most Italians live so long
 B That old people world-wide had low cholesterol levels
 C That most people in Campodimele were old
 D That there was a surprising number of old people in Campodimele

10 What do the elderly of Campodimele do as a pastime?

- A go and watch chickens
 B sit and talk
 C prepare large meals
 D work very hard

11 What do the elderly of Campodimele not suffer from?

- A traffic accidents
 B transport problems
 C sadness and solitude
 D too much hard work

12 What is a unique feature of all Campodimelans?

- A a restless nature
 B low blood pressure
 C they all have the same genes
 D they have never left the village

13 Which other group did the study investigate?

- A the Italian population
 B the Campodimelans' children and grandchildren
 C Canadians in Italy
 D Mediterranean people

14 What does one Campodimelan think the secret to living for a long time is?

- A walking for two hours a day
 B always eating at the same time
 C getting up and going to bed at the same time
 D eating raw spring onions

15 What is not used very much in the restaurant mentioned?

- A salt and butter
 B homemade pasta
 C seasoned snails
 D wild mushrooms