Birthday Moons

It's Just a Phase You're Going Through...

PURPOSE

Have you ever noticed that the Moon appears to change shape? Does this occur randomly or is there a pattern of change? Discover the answer by taking a virtual trip to the Moon for your birthday!

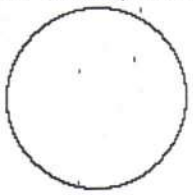
MATERIALS

- Internet access via Web browser, e.g., Netscape Communicator or Microsoft Internet Explorer
- Pencil and hardcopy of Student Answer Sheet
- 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003 or 2004 calendar

PROCEDURE

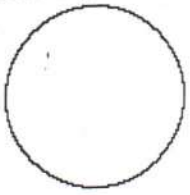
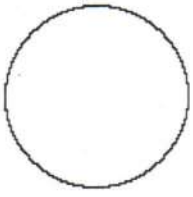
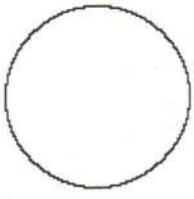
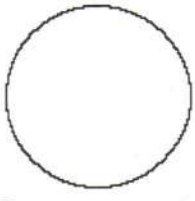
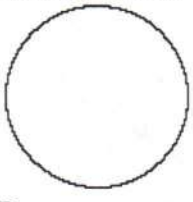
1. Begin your trip by visiting the Virtual Reality Moon Phase Pictures Web site (a virtual time machine that enables you to time-travel to see how the Moon would appear for almost any date in the past, present, and future). For your birthdate (either the current year or the year you were born), select the correct field settings (see sample settings) and click the "Show Phase" button. Using a pencil, sketch *exactly* how the Moon appears on your birthday (shade the dark side of the Moon).
2. Sketch how the Moon appears every three days for the next 30 days after your birthday.

Your Birthday Moon

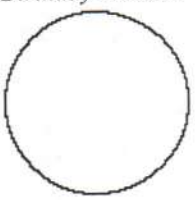
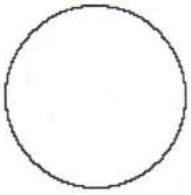
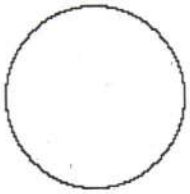
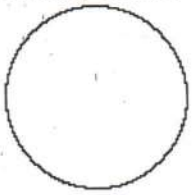
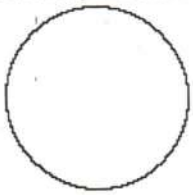


Date: _____
(mm/dd/yy)

Technical Tip: After sketching your birthday moon, sketch how the Moon would appear three days later. Press the "Back" button on your Web browser. Change only the field settings for "Day" and if necessary, "Month" (all other settings should remain the same). Repeat the process until you have shaded how the Moon appears every three days for the next 30 days after your birthday.

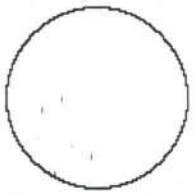
3 days after your Birthday Moon...	*6 days after your Birthday Moon...*	*9 days after your Birthday Moon...*	*12 days after your Birthday Moon...*	*15 days after your Birthday Moon...*
				
Date: _____ (mm/dd/yy)	Date: _____ (mm/dd/yy)	Date: _____ (mm/dd/yy)	Date: _____ (mm/dd/yy)	Date: _____ (mm/dd/yy)

328

18 days after your Birthday Moon...	*21 days after your Birthday Moon...*	*24 days after your Birthday Moon...*	*27 days after your Birthday Moon...*	*30 days after your Birthday Moon...*
				
Date: _____ (mm/dd/yy)	Date: _____ (mm/dd/yy)	Date: _____ (mm/dd/yy)	Date: _____ (mm/dd/yy)	Date: _____ (mm/dd/yy)

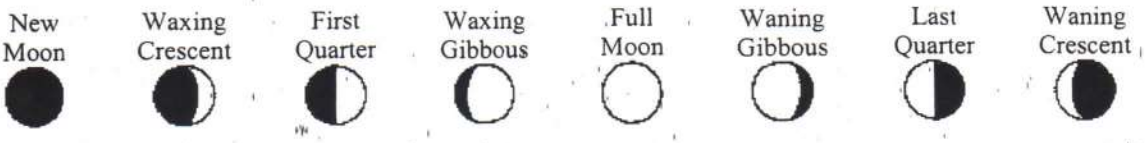
ACTIVITY QUESTIONS

33 days after your Birthday Moon...



Date: _____ (mm/dd/yy)

1. Do you see a pattern? Predict what the Moon would look like 33 days after your birthday. Use the Internet to verify your prediction.



2. There are eight named Moon phases (shown in order of occurrence in the diagram above). Which named Moon phase most closely resembles your birthday moon? See if you can match other phase names with some of the moons you sketched.

3. Approximately how many days does it take for the Moon to go through a cycle of phases, that is, how many days pass until the *exact* same Moon shape reappears?

Related Resources | Curriculum | SCSA Home | www.wsanford.com