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Opening extract from

Space

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The Moon

One of the closest things in space to Earth is the Moon – a big ball of rock that travels around it in a circle.



How big is the Moon?

The Moon is a still, silent place. It has no air, water, or life of any kind (not even tiny insects).

We only ever see one side of the Moon as it goes around Earth. The other side looks very different...

Why does the Moon change shape?

At night, the Moon looks as if it's shining. In fact, the light comes from the Sun. The Moon acts like a mirror, reflecting sunlight onto Earth.



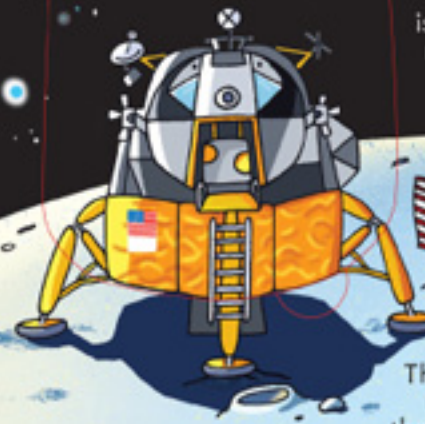
Why does the Moon go around Earth?

On the Moon

Around 40 years ago, astronauts flew spacecraft to the Moon. They climbed out onto the dusty surface...

How did they get there?





This spacecraft is called a 'lunar module' ('luna' means moon in Latin).

They put flags up to show they had visited.

A 'Moon buggy' to drive around in



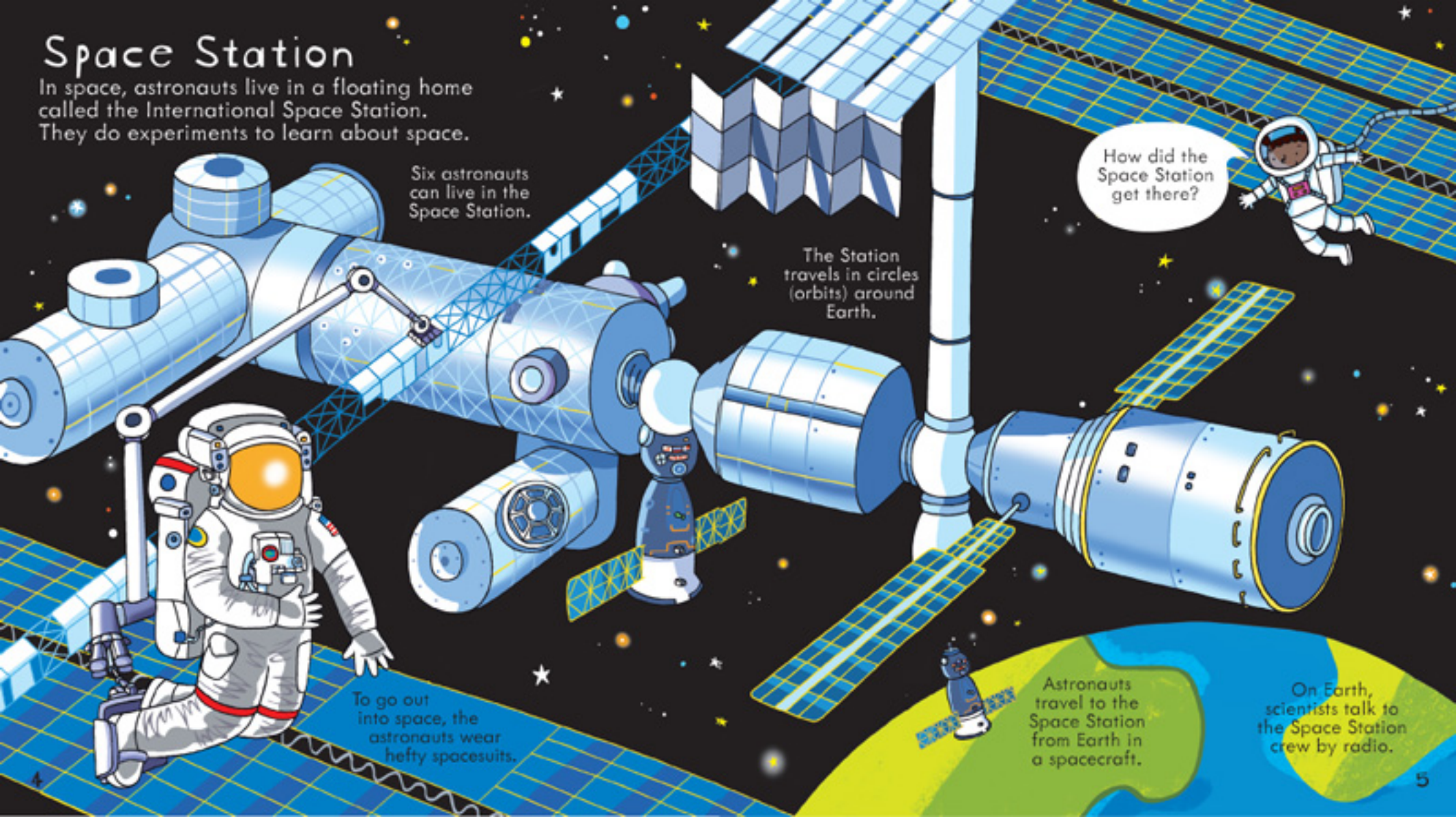
The astronauts collected Moon rocks to study.





Space Station

In space, astronauts live in a floating home called the International Space Station. They do experiments to learn about space.



Glittering galaxies

Stars aren't just sprinkled through space. They gather together in vast, dazzling groups, called galaxies.

Old stars die inside galaxies...

Together, all of the galaxies, and everything else in space, are known as the Universe.

Galaxies are very, very far apart from each other in space.

Our Sun is just one of 200,000 million stars that make up this spectacular 'spiral' galaxy, called the Milky Way.

What's at the middle of the Milky Way?

Our own Solar System is somewhere around here.

The stars in a galaxy are all very far apart. Astronomers measure the distances in 'light years'.

There's a bright bulge in the middle of most galaxies.

How many galaxies are there in the Universe?

A rocket would take millions of years to fly from one side of the Milky Way to the other.

The Milky Way is shaped like a disc, with a bulge in the middle.

Galaxies come in lots of shapes and sizes.

This one is the 'Cartwheel Galaxy'.