discovery museum

FLY ME TO THE MOON!

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When you look into the night sky, there are billions upon billions of objects you can see. You may not be able to identify them all, or even tell they're there, but the night sky is a spectacular place. One body shines brightly, standing out among them all: the Moon.

Earth's moon is a natural **satellite**, an orbiting body that was not made by people. It is a rocky object with a solid surface, which formed around the same time as the Earth and the rest of the solar system, between four and five billion years ago. Even though the Moon is made of rock, it appears to shine in our night sky. It's highly reflective, so the light we see from the Moon is actually light reflected from our Sun!

As the Moon **orbits**, or goes around, the Earth, it moves in and out of shadow. Sometimes it can catch and reflect light from the Sun on the entire side facing towards us; sometimes it catches only some light on the side towards us, and sometimes it's in a position where none of the light is reflected back where we can see. The Moon appears to change shape as it goes through these **lunar phases**. Of course, it doesn't really change shape--it just has different parts that we can see! It takes about a month for the Moon to make a full **revolution** (go all the way around) and experience each phase.

MOON PHASES

KEEP A MOON JOURNAL

Learn what each phase looks like where you live by keeping a moon journal! Every night for a month, make an observation and draw what you see. Write a description of how the Moon looks that night, and write your prediction for what it will look like the following night.
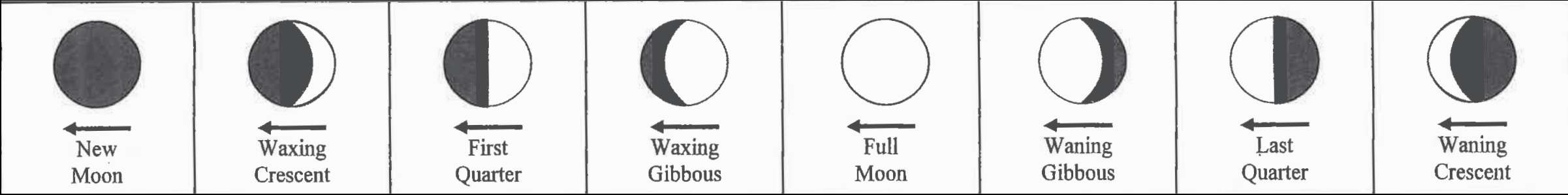
Can you accurately predict what the next phase will look like?

What patterns do you notice?

Moon Journal

MAKE A MOON PHASE BRACELET

New Moon	Waxing Crescent	First Quarter	Waxing Gibbous	Full Moon	Waning Gibbous	Last Quarter	Waning Crescent

Print and cut out this strip of Moon phase images. You can tape the short edges together so that the whole thing forms a circle--make sure the printed side is the outside--so you have a wearable set of phases that show you the whole month!

NIE NEWS IN EDUCATION

Standards Alignment:
5-ESS1-2, SL.5.5