

UOW College Hong Kong / Community College of City University
Student English Enhancement Unit (SEE U)
Daily English Practice

Week 10

#99 Why is China eager to explore a remote part of the Moon?

Skills/ Objectives: To train students' reading, listening and writing skills

PART 1: Before you read...

Preparatory questions

Qt 1: What is the Fermi Paradox?

Qt 2: The moon has a lot of helium. Why doesn't China or the US bring it back for use on Earth?

The answers to both Qts 1 and 2 will be provided at the next set of Daily English Practice exercises.

Vocabulary

1. fanfare (noun): a loud short piece of music played on brass instrument to attract attention to an important announcement.
2. feat (noun): something requiring great skills and courage to do
3. also-ran (noun): a contestant who is unlikely to win or has lost
4. haul (verb): to pull some heavy object slowly and with difficulty
5. has committed to (verb): promised to do something
6. alley (noun): small narrow lane
7. pose (verb): make something very prominent

The following is/are answer(s) to relevant question(s) in the preceding set of exercises "The toughest form of life on Earth":

Qt 1: Tardigrades are highly resilient living creatures and their existence suggests that it is possible there are similarly resilient living creatures surviving in other parts of the universe under tough physical environments.

Qt 2: Tardigrades are the creatures on Earth which can survive heating up to 300 degrees and freezing down to -300 degrees Fahrenheit.

PART 2: Article for Reading

Read the article posted by SCMP about China's recent rocket mission to the Moon:

The fuel quest that could be driving China's mission to the moon, SCMP 6 Jan, 2019

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/2180893/fuel-quest-could-be-driving-chinas-mission-moon>

PART 3: Listening Comprehension

You should also listen to the following YouTube video clip to find out more on the topic, while practicing your listening skills at the same time:

China Lands on FAR SIDE of Moon - Alien Base Photos Imminent?
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ig6Ncb39aM4>

PART 4: Writing Practice

The former and the latter

Did you notice the use of “the latter” in the following sentence found in the main article?

Nasa’s top administrator has committed to the latter option.

“The former” indicates the first item named in a sequence and “the latter” refers to the second which is also the last one. These two terms provide easy reference and avoid the trouble of repeating a long item, e.g.,

The boy who has a kind heart to care about old people and the selfish girl have both scored high marks in this charity competition but the judges’ preference is given to the former.

In the above example, “the former” has saved the effort of repeating the long phrase “the boy who has a kind heart to care about old people”. However, this is not to say the two terms can only be used to refer to long items. They work well with short ones equally well, e.g.,

Tom and Mary are both good students in the class but the latter scores higher academic marks.

One thing we should note in using these two terms is that their reference would fail if the number of items in the sequence exceeds two. Therefore, you cannot use “the latter” to refer to “Mary” in the sentence below:

Peter, Paul and Mary were once famous singers but I like Peter the best.

Can you write a sentence of your own using “the former” or “the latter”? Send your writing to see.u@cccu.edu.hk. Remember! Our **SEE U** teachers are always ready to give you feedback.