

Seeds in Space

In 1971, 500 seeds went into space. They flew on the Apollo 14 rocket. They circled the moon and then came back to Earth.

The forest service wanted to see how being in space would change the seeds. They chose five different types of seeds for the experiment. The seeds were all from trees: loblolly, sycamore, sweetgum, redwood, and Douglas fir.

After their trip to space, the seeds were sent to the government. The forest service planted them. 420 of the 500 seeds grew to be trees. They were called moon trees.

Foresters planted the moon trees next to Earth trees. These were trees grown from seeds that had never been to space. The foresters compared the trees to see if there were any differences between them. They found that the trees were exactly the same.

The moon trees were planted all over the United States. Some were even planted in other countries like Brazil and Switzerland. After a while, people forgot about the trees. No one knew the story of the seeds. No one knew where the trees were planted.

In 1996 a third grade class found a moon tree outside of their school. It had a small sign that explained what it was. The class wrote to the government and told them about the tree.



The government asked people to help find more of the trees. They made a list of all the ones they could find. The list is growing as more trees are found. Maybe you will find a moon tree one day too!



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. What kind of seeds went into space in 1971?
 - a. Flower seeds
 - b. Tree seeds
 - c. Vegetable seeds
 - d. Fruit seeds

2. What are Earth trees?
 - a. Trees whose seeds had not been to space
 - b. Trees whose seeds flew in Apollo 14
 - c. Trees planted in the United States
 - d. Trees planted in other countries

3. How were the moon trees and Earth trees different?
 - a. Moon trees were taller
 - b. Earth trees had more leaves
 - c. They were exactly the same
 - d. Moon seeds did not grown into trees

4. Why did the government ask people to find the trees?
 - a. Because they didn't care about the trees
 - b. Because they didn't know where they were planted
 - c. Because they forgot about the trees
 - d. B and C

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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 - b. Tree seeds**
 - c. Vegetable seeds
 - d. Fruit seeds
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