

Audioscript
Listening comprehension

*For items 1–10 listen to an interview with the astronaut Charles Duke, who is talking about his trip to the moon, and decide whether the statements 1–10 are TRUE according to the text you hear (A), or FALSE (B), or the information on the statement is NOT STATED in the text (C). You will hear the text **twice**. You have **20 seconds** to look through the statements.*

(pause 20 seconds)

Now we begin

Interviewer: My guest today is Charles Duke, one of the few people to have walked on the moon as part of an Apollo mission. Charles, welcome to the studio. Have you always been hooked on space travel?

Charles: Quite frankly, as a kid, it'd never entered my head. There wasn't even a space program when I was young . . . so there weren't any astronauts.

Interviewer: What about science fiction films at the cinema?

Charles: I'd seen them, of course I used to wonder what space travel might be like — but it was never what you might describe as a fascination — if you follow me.

Interviewer: So, how did it all come about?

Charles: It was at the Naval Academy. . .

Interviewer: Not in the Air Force?

Charles: No, but I was a navy pilot. I had fallen in love with planes and nothing else would do. And that gave me the opportunity to start — to get selected for the astronaut program.

Interviewer: Presumably by then they were talking about putting rockets into space?

Charles: Absolutely.

Interviewer: And how did you find the training?

Charles: I suppose the lunar surface training in the spacesuit was physically demanding in a way.

Interviewer: Quite uncomfortable, I imagine.

Charles: It's not what you might expect. Once the spacesuits get inflated, it gets very rigid. You had to fight to bend your arms and move your fingers inside the gloves.

Interviewer: And how long did you spend inside it?

Charles: Around four to five hours. But actually, the most challenging part was worrying about how to handle the simulator because we needed to know how to land and then take off on the moon.

Interviewer: I don't think I could have coped with that!

Charles: I'm not sure I did. But if you did something wrong, you were in trouble and we often spent eight hours a day trying to learn what to do!

Interviewer: So how did you feel when you first heard that you were actually going to the moon?

Charles: I suppose you're expecting me to say 'exhilarated'. But I knew there were lots of 'ifs' — it would happen if they didn't cancel the program, if I didn't get sick and so on. So I stopped doing all the dangerous sports I was involved in.

Interviewer: So you knew you had one chance and if you blew it, you wouldn't get another?

Charles: That just about sums it up!

Interviewer: And when you eventually got there, what impact did it have on you? Landing on the moon, I mean!

Charles: When we saw the moon for the first time from about 1500 meters, we recognized the landmarks but, as we got closer, we saw that the spot we were going to land on was very rough — big rocks and craters —and we panicked a bit. And the more we tried to maneuver and the closer we got, the more moon dust we blew out.

Interviewer: But you landed safely?

Charles: Eventually, yes. We were six hours late. So when we touched down, we erupted in enthusiasm. We shook hands and hugged each other.

Interviewer: Not an easy feat in spacesuits.

Charles: [laughs] No, indeed. But after that . . . we had to rest for a certain period . . . we got outside for the very first time.

Interviewer: You must have been terrified.

Charles: We had no sense of fear about stepping off the ladder onto the moon. We just jumped off and started bouncing around like lambs in a field in springtime.

Interviewer: And when you saw the lunar landscape, did it live up to expectations?

Charles: What struck me most, apart from its awesome attraction, was its desolation. The sky was jet black. You felt as if you could reach out and touch it. There were no stars and the sun was shining all the time.

Interviewer: And what went through your mind at that moment?

Charles: The fact that it was so untouched. The fact that nobody had ever been to that particular spot before. It was simply breathtaking.

Interviewer: And do you have a favorite memory of the mission?

Charles: Definitely. It was the thing that we did during the last moonwalk. We were about 6 kilometers or so from the base, and on the edge of a big crater, 100 meters deep. We had to be careful as we walked along the ridge because one slip would have been dangerous. Suddenly we saw this huge rock. It was a long way off, and there are no people or cars to judge distances or give you any sense of scale.

Interviewer: But you managed to get down to it?

Charles: Eventually. It was enormous. The biggest rock anybody had ever touched on the moon. I had a hammer and I hit a chunk of it — and it came off in my hand — a piece the size of a small melon.

Interviewer: A different kind of souvenir! So do you think we should go back? What's the reason for investing all this time and money in the space race anyway?

Charles: Oh, it's the prime place for a scientific base...

You have 20 seconds to check your answers. (*pause 20 seconds*)
Now listen to the text again. (*text repeated*)
This is the end of the listening comprehension task.