To the Moon!

by Lisa M. Guidone

NASA sets its sights on the moon, then Mars.

Astronauts are aiming for the moon again. This time, though, they plan to stay there. Astronauts hope to live and work on the moon by 2020, according to NASA. The U.S. space agency recently announced plans to build a base there.

At first, four-person crews will stay for a week. By 2024, they will be able to live there for as long as six months.

The base will most likely be built near the moon's north or south pole. The poles get the most sunlight. At those locations, the moon base would be able to use solar power. That is energy from the sun that can be used to create electricity.

Next Stop: Mars

The moon is the only place beyond Earth that humans have visited. At a distance of about 238,900 miles, the moon is Earth's closest space neighbor. So far, only 12 people have walked on the moon's dusty surface. Those astronauts traveled there on Apollo missions from 1969 to 1972.
NASA hopes the moon mission will kick off a new era, or time period, of space exploration. Scientists say that living on the moon is the first step in preparing astronauts to travel to Mars. "By demonstrating we can survive on another world for a long time, we build confidence that we can venture much farther from Earth and stay for longer periods of time," NASA official Michael Braukus told *WR News*. 
1. Before astronauts can stay on the moon for six months, they will
   A. use space shuttles to travel to space.
   B. build an International Space Station.
   C. travel to Mars.
   D. try to live on the moon for a week.

2. When the Apollo 17 landed on the moon,
   A. NASA sent astronauts to Mars.
   B. Columbia was launched.
   C. a space station was built.
   D. astronauts walked on the moon.

3. NASA will build the base at one of the poles of the moon because
   A. at the poles astronauts can walk around without spacesuits.
   B. the poles will be warmer because of the sunlight.
   C. the astronauts will try to grow plants and need the sunlight.
   D. they will be able to use solar power for electricity.

4. After astronauts are able to live on the moon for six months,
   A. an International Space Station will be built.
   B. they will try to travel to Mars.
   C. a base will be built at either the north or south pole.
   D. they will learn to use solar power.

5. Is space travel important? Explain.