

READING AND SPEAKING

Is Princess Diana living on the Moon?

1 What do you know about the following events? Discuss in groups and share information.

- The death of Princess Diana
- The Apollo moon landings

Turn to p163 and check your ideas with the **FACT FILES**. When and where did the events take place? Who are the people mentioned?

2 These two events generated many conspiracy theories. What are conspiracy theories? How are they usually circulated nowadays? Do you know of any theories about the events?

3 Work with a partner.

Student A Read about Princess Diana.

Student B Read about the Apollo Moon landings.

4 Answer the questions about your conspiracy.

- 1 What are the different conspiracy theories mentioned? Write a list in note form.
- 2 What proof is given to support them?
- 3 What are the reasons suggested for hiding the true facts?
- 4 How has the Internet or the media played a part?

Use your answers to talk to your partner about your article.

Vocabulary work

Read the sentences below. Find words in the texts which mean the same as those underlined.

Diana

- 1 The huge number of websites is absolutely amazing.
- 2 The florists devised a clever but wicked plot to murder Diana.
- 3 The car crash was a carefully planned trick, not a border traffic accident.
- 4 I don't believe any of these theories.
- 5 Someone in the Royal family devised a plot to interfere with the brakes.

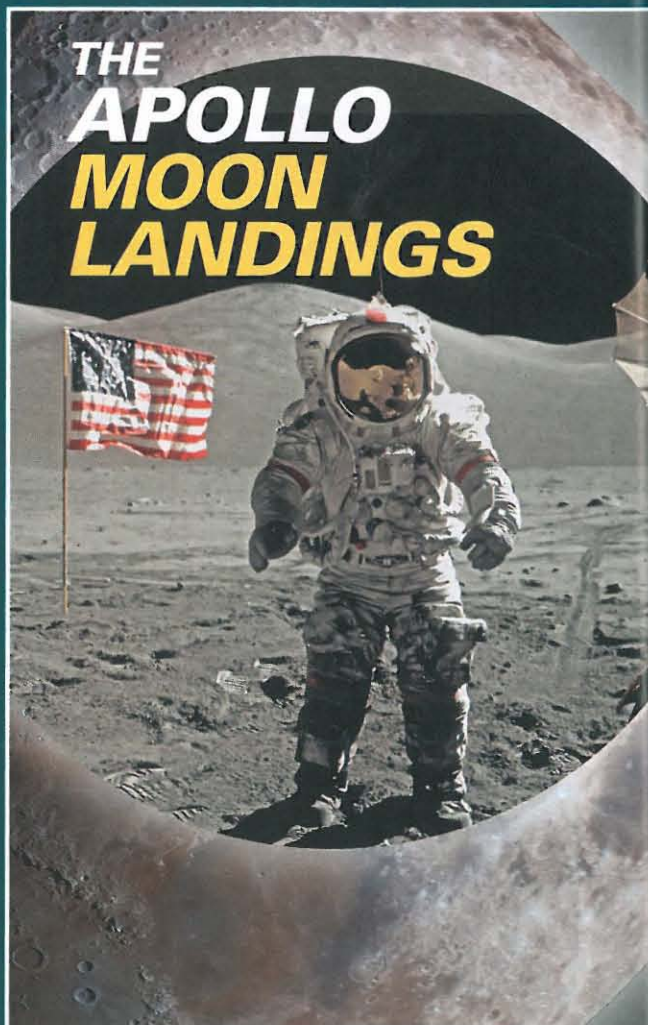
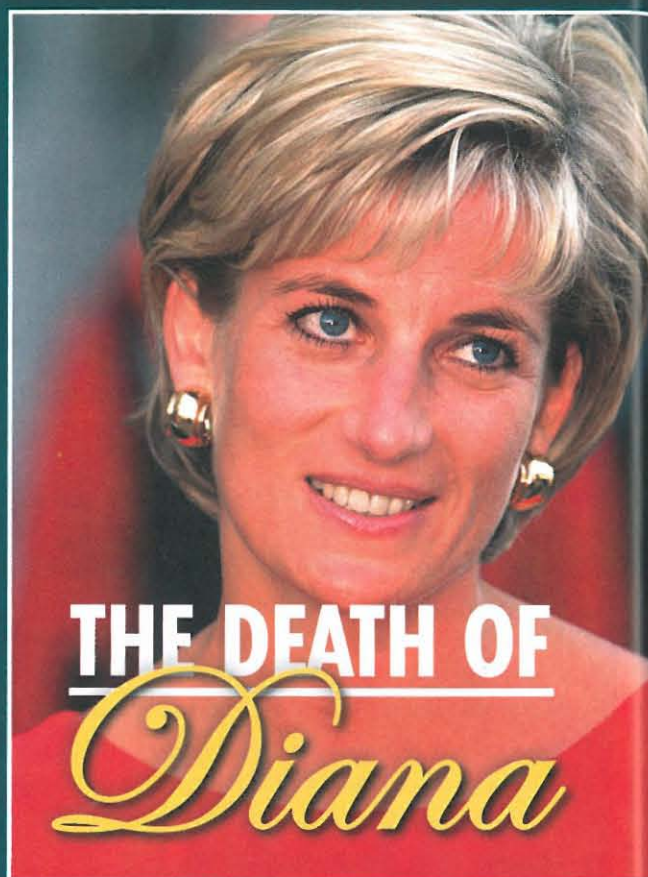
Moon landings

- 1 Rumours have been going round for many years.
- 2 The US flag is seen blowing and there is no wind on the Moon.
- 3 A fantastic exhibition of stars.
- 4 Scientists have all agreed that the theorists don't have an argument.
- 5 NASA has been desperately trying to hide evidence of life.

What do you think?

- Which theories are the most believable? Which are the most unbelievable?
- What is it about the Internet that breeds such theories?
- Think of a recent major news event and work in your groups to devise conspiracy theories about it. Describe the event and your theories to the class.

▶▶ **WRITING** Linking ideas – Conjunctions p107



P CONSPIRACY THEORIES

The first Diana Conspiracy Site appeared on the Internet in Australia only hours after her death on August 31st, 1997. Since then an estimated 36,000 Diana conspiracy websites have been set up – breathtaking by anyone’s standards. Hypotheses range from pure James Bond (‘it was all an MI6 plot to protect the monarchy’) to farce (‘it was a fiendish murder plot thought up by the world’s florists to sell lots of flowers’). And most popular of all, Diana, Princess of Wales, isn’t dead after all – that terrible car crash in Paris was an elaborate hoax to enable the Princess and Dodi Fayed to fake their own deaths so that they could live in blissful isolation for the rest of their lives.

Subscribers to this theory say that Diana was fed up with the intrusions into her private life and used the wealth and resources of the Fayed family to fake her death, and now she and Dodi are living on a small tropical island, communicating with her sons by satellite video conferencing. Think about it, they say, we never actually saw her body, did we?

You don’t buy into any of these theories? Don’t worry. There are plenty more to choose from.

For example, Paul Burrell, Diana’s former butler, claims that the Princess predicted her own death in a car crash. Apparently, she was so frightened that ten months before her death she wrote to Burrell saying that a plot was being hatched by a member of the Royal family and her car’s brakes would be tampered with and she would suffer serious head injuries. And all of this so that the Prince of Wales could marry again.

These theories multiply because it is so hard for us to believe that a princess, with all her wealth and bodyguards, could be killed by something as arbitrary and mundane as a traffic accident. Psychologically, we need conspiracy theories to make the tragedies of life more bearable. And the Internet helps feed the global paranoia.



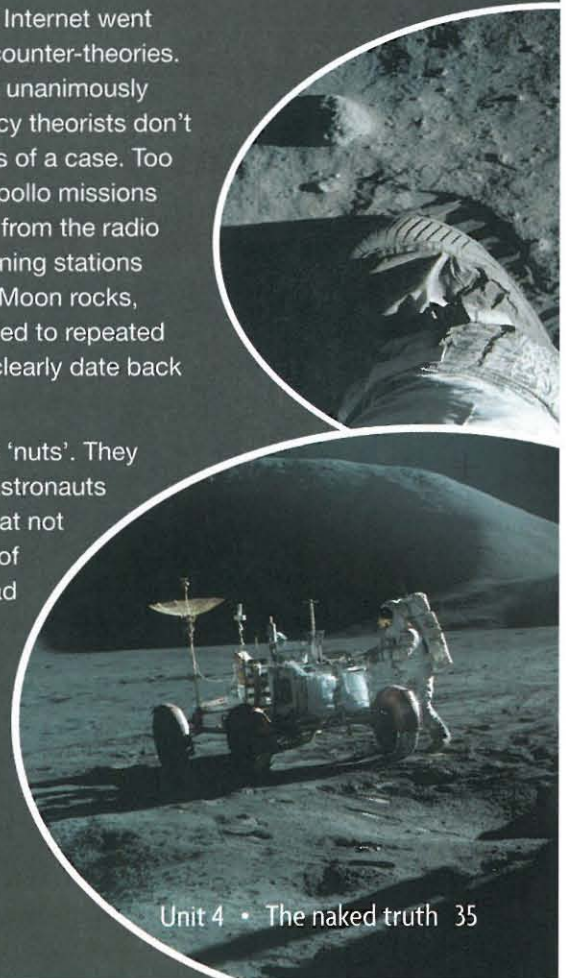
For over 40 years rumours have been circulating that the Apollo moon landings were faked. They say astronaut Neil Armstrong made no ‘giant leap for mankind’, they assert that the 1969 moon mission was a hoax to prove America won the space race, that the astronauts were ‘astro-nots’! The high point in the Great Moon Landing Conspiracy came on 15 February 2001, the date that Fox television broadcast a programme entitled ‘Did We Land on the Moon?’. This alleged that the whole Moon landing had been staged inside a film studio on a US military base somewhere in the Mojave desert.

The programmers claimed:

- 1 The US flag planted on the Moon’s surface is seen fluttering, and there is no breeze of any kind on the Moon.
- 2 The photographs taken by the astronauts do not include any of the Moon’s night sky, where there would have been a stunning array of stars on view.
- 3 The shadows in the pictures are clearly coming from more than one angle – an impossibility on the Moon, where the only light source is the sun, but more than plausible inside a film studio.
- 4 One of the famed Moon rocks brought back by the Apollo astronauts is marked with a tell-tale letter ‘C’, suggesting the markings not of some alien life force but of a film prop.

After the programme the Internet went crazy with theories and counter-theories. However, scientists have unanimously agreed that the conspiracy theorists don’t have even the beginnings of a case. Too many things about the Apollo missions were impossible to fake, from the radio signals picked up at listening stations around the world, to the Moon rocks, which have been subjected to repeated geological analysis and clearly date back several millennia.

Finally there are the UFO ‘nuts’. They actually do believe that astronauts went to the Moon, but that not only did they find a load of rocks but also widespread evidence of an ancient alien civilisation – a discovery so terrifying that NASA has been desperately trying to conceal it from the public ever since.



VOCABULARY

Saying the opposite

Antonyms

1 Compare these sentences. Which antonyms are used? Which sounds better in this context?

Some theories are plausible but others are implausible.

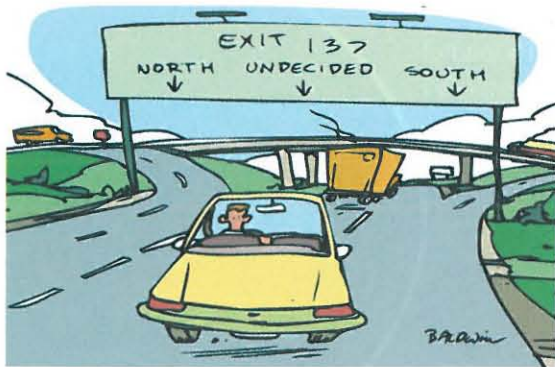
Some theories are plausible but others are ridiculous.

2 Antonyms can sometimes be formed with a negative prefix. What is the negative prefix for these words?

believable credible honest
legal probable responsible

1 What parts of speech are these words? Write antonyms for them using prefixes where possible.

Word	Antonym(s)
fake <i>adj</i>	<i>genuine, real, authentic</i>
like <i>vb</i>	<i>dislike, hate, loathe, can't stand</i>
tiny	
happiness	
guilty	
safe	
admit	
improve	
sincere	
success	
mature	
encourage	
kind/generous	
appear	



2 Complete the conversations with the correct form of the words in exercise 1.

1 A Gary's a really _____ businessman.
B Yeah, but he's a complete _____ as a family man. He never sees his children.

2 A My grandad's so _____, he gives me a £20 note every time I see him.
B Lucky you! My grandad's famed for his _____.
A fiver every birthday, if he remembers.

3 A Well, Henry, I'm pleased there's been some _____ in your behaviour this term, but unfortunately your work has _____.
B Didn't I do OK in the test then?

4 A You're not going bungee jumping! It sounds really _____.
B No, honestly, it's _____ enough as long as you're careful.

5 A Our teacher is always _____ us. I feel useless.
B I know – it's not fair, he should give us more _____ if he wants us to work hard.

T 4.9 Listen and check.

3 What is the effect of using antonyms in these conversations?

A What **lousy** weather!
B Yes, it's not exactly **tropical**, is it?

A Jenny's **thick**, isn't she?
B Well, she isn't the **brightest of people**, it's true.

Write similar conversations with a partner about these topics. Be honest but tactful.

- a boring party
- a hopeless football team
- an awful holiday
- a mean friend

T 4.10 Listen and compare.

4 What's the opposite of ...?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 a tough question / tough meat | 4 a hard mattress / a hard exam |
| 2 a clear sky / a clear conscience | 5 a live animal / live music |
| 3 fair hair / a fair decision | 6 a light colour / a light sleep |

5 Match the words and their meanings.

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| 1 abused | not ever used |
| 2 disused | not used any more |
| 3 unused | used in the wrong way |
| 4 misused | used too much |
| 5 overused | not used enough |
| 6 underused | used cruelly or badly |