The Moon goes around the Earth and this circular movement is called an “orbit”. The same side of the Moon always faces the Earth and it takes one month for it to go around the Earth. Its distance from the Earth is a little more than 200,000 miles. It is about ¼ the size of the Earth, which means the Earth is four times as large as the Moon. It is a dry land that has millions of craters with rocks and dust. Its surface is covered with about two inches of dust.

The Moon has no air or atmosphere around it, so it does not stay as comfortable and warm as the Earth. Its temperature is -170 degree F at night which is very cold, but it is 265 degree F during the day which is very hot. The hottest temperature on the Earth is about 130 degree F, so the Moon can become twice as hot as the Earth! If you stood on the Moon, the sky would look dark even in the daytime! That is because there is no air or atmosphere. This is also the reason why the Moon is silent. There is no wind, rain or any other type of weather on the Moon.

Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were astronauts who flew on the Apollo 11 rocket and landed on the Moon. They were the first people to walk on the Moon on July 20, 1969. They and other astronauts have taken Moon rocks to study from their trips. Scientists found that the Moon rocks are similar to the rocks on the Earth. These rocks are very old, about 4 billion years old.

Most scientists think the Moon was made after the Earth hit something in space. A large chunk of the Earth broke off and that became the Moon. Scientists think this happened 60 million years after the Earth was formed. The Moon sometimes shimmers at night when we look up at the night sky. “Shimmer” means to shine softly or with a flickering light or glow. The Moon does not shine by its own light, but by the light from the Sun.

We see the Moon because the Sun is shining on it. Sometimes it passes between the Sun and the Earth. When its shadow falls on the Earth, we see some parts of the Sun covered by the Moon. This is called a “solar eclipse”. This happens about two times a year. When it passes through the Earth’s shadow, the shadow blocks the sun’s light from hitting the Moon. This is called a “lunar eclipse”. We don’t see part or the entire Moon during a lunar eclipse. These occur a few times a year, too.

People will someday return to the Moon. When they do, it will be to stay. They will build a base there. It will be the first settlement in the beginning of an interplanetary migration that will eventually take them throughout the Solar System.