

HARLEY HITCH

AND THE MISSING MOON

AN INVENTIVE ADVENTURE FROM AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR
VASHTI HARDY AND ILLUSTRATOR GEORGE ERMOS

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LESSON PLAN: LOWER KS2

HARLEY HITCH AND THE MISSING MOON

OBJECTIVES

- To sketch and paint the moon above the Iron Forest.
- To describe the moon and the influence it has on Earth.
- To compose a Haiku poem about the moon.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Reading

- Discuss words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination.
- Participate in discussion about books.

Writing

- Discuss the structure of a Haiku.
- Discuss and record ideas.
- Compose sentences orally, progressively building a varied and rich vocabulary.
- Read aloud their own writing, to a group or the whole class, using appropriate intonation and controlling the tone and volume so that the meaning is clear.

ART & DESIGN

- Improve painting and sketching techniques.
- Explore a famous Van Gogh painting.

RESOURCES

- **Resource Sheet 1: The Moon above the Iron Forest**
- **Resource Sheet 2: Vincent Van Gogh's *The Starry Night* (1889)**
- **Resource Sheet 3: Our Amazing Moon**
- **Resource Sheet 4: Moon Haiku**

This lesson incorporates painting and poetry. It can run as one full session or teachers may prefer to complete the Haiku as a separate session.

LEAD IN

Read *Harley Hitch and the Missing Moon* by Vashti Hardy prior to the session.

Look back at page 45, and share **Resource Sheet 1: The Moon** above the Iron Forest, for children to follow. Reread the sentence and notice that there isn't an accompanying illustration. Ask children to close their eyes – can they imagine what it must have looked like? Discuss options for some good descriptive words to describe how it might have looked and how children would feel stood in such a place. Children can record their suggested words on **Resource Sheet 1**, to use later.

Share **Resource Sheet 2: Vincent Van Gogh's *The Starry Night* (1889)**, and ask children to express to a partner what they can see and what they notice about the way Van Gogh has shown the light of the night sky and how he used his brush to create this. Highlight the colours (dark and light) and the small brushstrokes, explaining that Van Gogh used a very thick oil paint to create this effect.

Explain that children are going to celebrate the moon (just like Harley Hitch and her friends did) by creating a painting of the scene described in the passage, using Van Gogh's painting style for inspiration. Demonstrate lightly sketching the scene in pencil using small back and forth movements. Then discuss the colours you will need to use to get the effect of the night-time forest and the sunlight reflecting off the moon. Model painting in small brush strokes, explaining that you will use the darker colours first, then let it sit to dry for a bit before adding in the much lighter brush strokes that create the effect of light. Explain that you have a challenge for children to complete while they are waiting for the darker layers to dry.

Continued...



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LESSON PLAN: LOWER KS2 CONT.

TASK

Equip children with art paper, sketching pencils, fine paint brushes and thick paints in the colours discussed. Children sketch how they think the scene would look, taking care to use a swirling motion to help emulate the light spreading across the sky. Children then paint the darker colours onto their sketch using fine small brush strokes.

Once the darker layers have been finished, allow them to dry. In the meantime, ask children if they know what a Haiku is. Explain that it is a form of poetry comprised of three lines. Each line has a set number of syllables: 5, 7, 5. Look back at the words you collected to describe the scene. Clap the syllables in some of these words. Recap some of the amazing things our moon does by rereading the passage on **Resource Sheet 3: Our Amazing Moon** (the moon affects the tides ((in turn, the tides affect animals like crabs, mussels, starfish, snails)); the moon affects the length of our day; the moon brings a stable climate; the moon lights a dark night by reflecting light from the sun; the moon is beautiful to look at). Model creating a simple moon Haiku that could accompany your painting, using some of the ideas you have collected, e.g.:

*Huge round glowing ball
Controlling tides and weather
Beautiful Luna*

Challenge children to compose their own Haiku (they can complete this individually or in pairs), saying their ideas aloud before writing them down using **Resource Sheet 4: Moon Haiku**.

Once the darker layers of their paintings are dry, they can then add in the light paint brush strokes.

PLENARY

Invite the class to display their pictures and accompanying Haiku in a Luna gallery. Did everyone interpret the scene in the same way? How do the pictures differ? What is the impact of the Haiku and painting together? Encourage children to read their Haikus aloud to the class.

EXTENSION

Children could write a letter to Luna explaining that they have created paintings and written poems to celebrate how amazing he is and that he should return to the night sky.



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RESOURCE SHEET 1: THE MOON ABOVE THE IRON FOREST

The Moon rose above the Iron Forest, full and round,
bathing the treetops in its silver light ...



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RESOURCE SHEET 2: VINCENT VAN GOGH'S *THE STARRY NIGHT* (1889)



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RESOURCE SHEET 3: OUR AMAZING MOON



Crabs, mussels, starfish, snails – all of them rely on the tides for survival. Without life on our coasts, this would have effects for animals everywhere and could lead to extinctions. Without you, our days are short, and there would be a thousand days in a year! You help bring us a stable climate, and without you we would never experience the beauty of an eclipse.

“You make our lives shine bright, and your beauty is always changing in the night.”

Harley Hitch and the Missing Moon pg. 202



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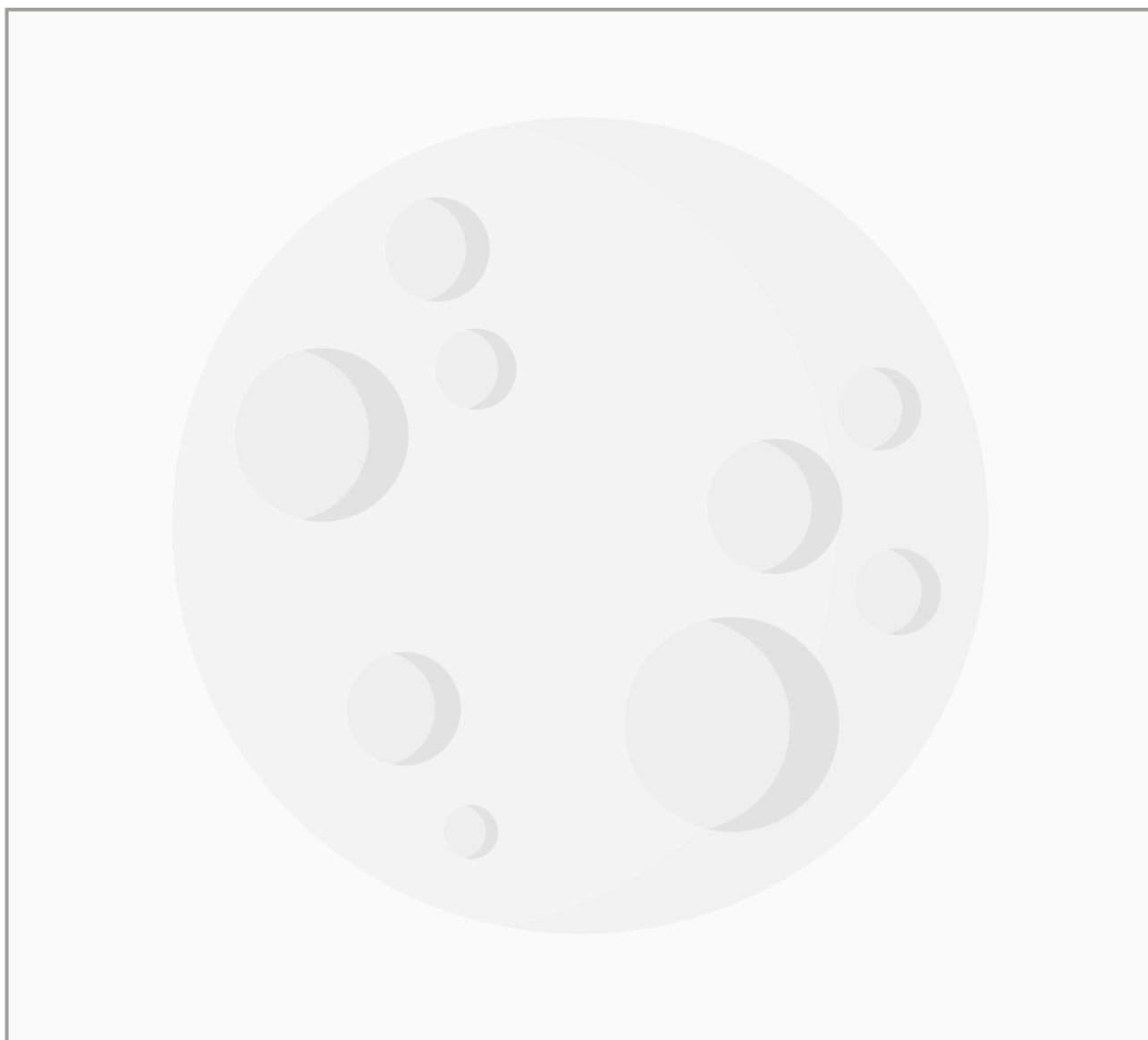
RESOURCE SHEET 4: MOON HAIKU

Compose a Haiku to the moon. A Haiku has only has three lines with the following syllables in each line:

Line 1 = 5 syllables

Line 2 = 7 syllables

Line 3 = 5 syllables



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LESSON PLAN: UPPER KS2



OBJECTIVES

- To glean key information about the influence of the moon on Earth from the text and other research.
- To know what would happen if the moon disappeared.
- To compose a letter of persuasion to the moon.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Reading

- Explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read.
- Summarise the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph.

Writing

- Identify the audience for and purpose of writing, selecting the appropriate form and using other similar writing as models for their own.
- Select appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning.
- Use a wide range of devices to build cohesion within and across paragraphs.
- Assess the effectiveness of their own and others' writing.
- Perform own compositions, using appropriate intonation, volume, and movement so that meaning is clear.

SCIENCE

- Identify scientific evidence that has been used to support or refute ideas or arguments (working scientifically).
- Describe the movement of the moon relative to Earth (Year 5).

RESOURCES

- **Resource Sheet 1: Our Amazing Moon**
- **Resource Sheet 2: Dear Luna Moon**
- **Resource Sheet 3: Why We Need the Moon – Research Notes**
- **Resource Sheet 4: A Letter to Luna Moon**

LEAD IN

Read *Harley Hitch and the Missing Moon* by Vashti Hardy prior to the session.

Look back at page 202 and hand out **Resource Sheet 1: Our Amazing Moon** for children to read in pairs. As they read, ask children to create a mental list of amazing things about the moon. Collect suggestions and write them down. Show children the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6MP920xMC0Q>

Think back to the story. *What did Harley and her friends do to persuade the moon to return to the sky?* They celebrated the moon and highlighted how important he was for them all, how beautiful he was, and how much they appreciated him.

What could they have tried if he had not come to the show? Suggest that they could have written a letter of persuasion.

Ask children if they can remember the key features of a persuasive letter:

- Usually written in present tense
- Includes conjunctions that link ideas (however, additionally, therefore)
- Uses emotive language (powerful verbs and adjectives)
- Incorporates facts alongside opinions
- Asks rhetorical questions and asks the reader if they disagree
- Reflects on possible counter arguments

Share **Resource Sheet 2: Dear Luna Moon** as a sample letter and explain that children are going to try and persuade Luna Moon to return to the sky by writing to him.

Continued...



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LESSON PLAN: UPPER KS2 CONT.

TASK

Children gather together facts from the video and information from the book. They then explore the Greenwich Museum page about what would happen if the moon actually disappeared: <https://www.rmg.co.uk/stories/topics/what-would-happen-if-moon-disappeared>. Children can record their notes and findings on **Resource Sheet 3: Why We Need the Moon – Research Notes** to collect all the facts they need to compose a persuasive letter to Luna, encouraging him to return to the night sky. Using **Resource Sheet 4: A Letter to Luna Moon**, encourage children to incorporate all key language features explored in the lead-in and to set out their letter in an introduction–arguments–conclusion structure.

Ask children to read their letters back to themselves before finding a partner and critiquing one another's letters, offering constructive ideas for improvement. Emphasise that this letter needs to be very persuasive or we are in big trouble as a planet!

PLENARY

Invite children to read their letters aloud in groups, adding dramatic and urgent intonation to their voices in order to plead with Luna Moon in an emotive way. Do children think they will succeed in persuading him?

EXTENSION

Children could create a chalk or oil pastel picture of Luna, exploring and demonstrating light and dark in their work.

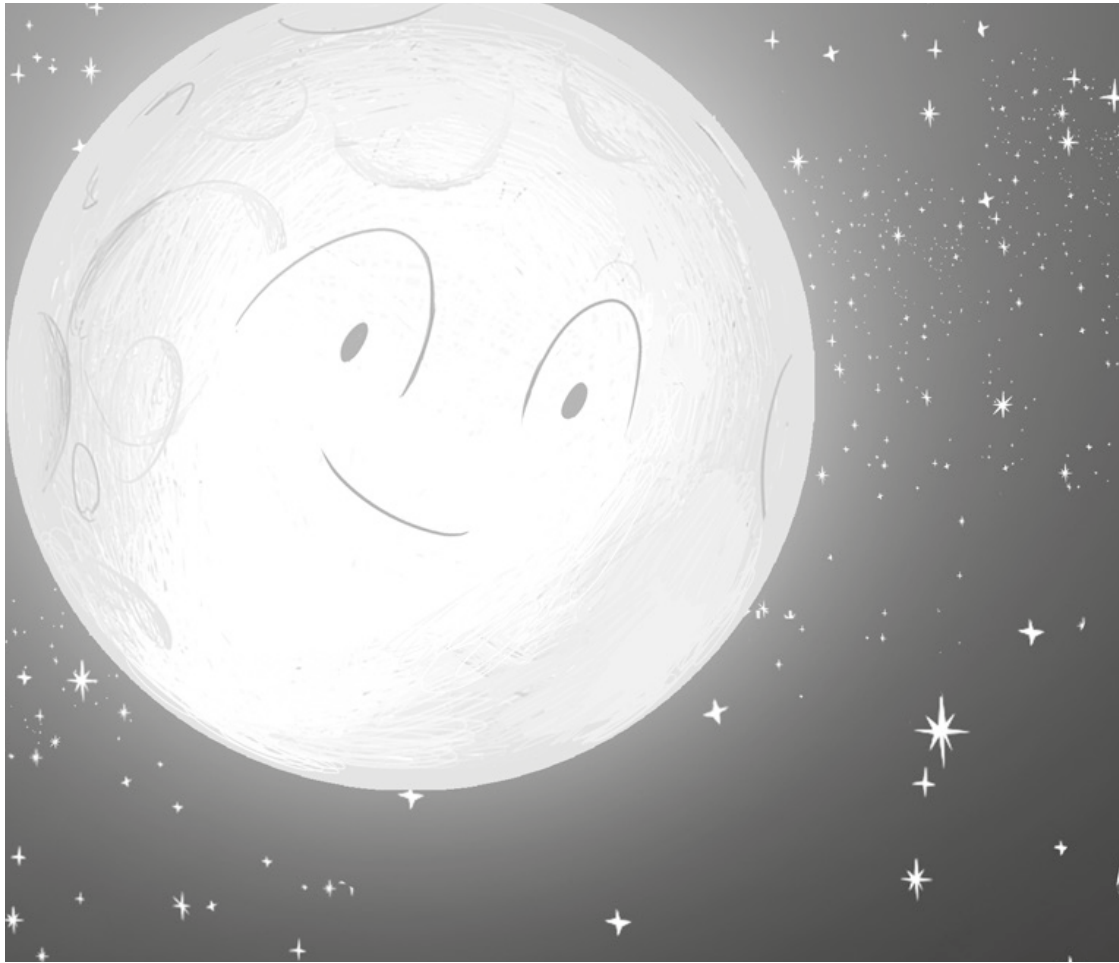


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RESOURCE SHEET 1: OUR AMAZING MOON



Crabs, mussels, starfish, snails – all of them rely on the tides for survival. Without life on our coasts, this would have effects for animals everywhere and could lead to extinctions. Without you, our days are short, and there would be a thousand days in a year! You help bring us a stable climate, and without you we would never experience the beauty of an eclipse.

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RESOURCE SHEET 2: DEAR LUNA MOON

Dear Luna Moon,

I am writing to you about your worrying absence from our night sky recently, and in the hope I can persuade you to return.

All of Earth's creatures miss you terribly. We miss your beauty and the wonderful glow you give our world as you gently reflect the sun's rays down upon us.

We also miss the positive effect you have on our planet. I am sure that you have spotted how much the seashore creatures are struggling without the tides you create, and how exhausted we all are (now that our days are shorter). Moreover, the weather has gone weird and Earth is feeling much wobblier without you!

I realise now that you must be feeling incredibly neglected and upset. Isn't it awful that no-one even calls you by your name any more? However, I promise that you are loved and respected by all Earth's creatures, and we will do better in the future.

Please come back and take your rightful place in the night sky. We promise to call you by your proper name and never to take you for granted again.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter and I hope to see your radiance in the night sky again soon.

Yours sincerely,

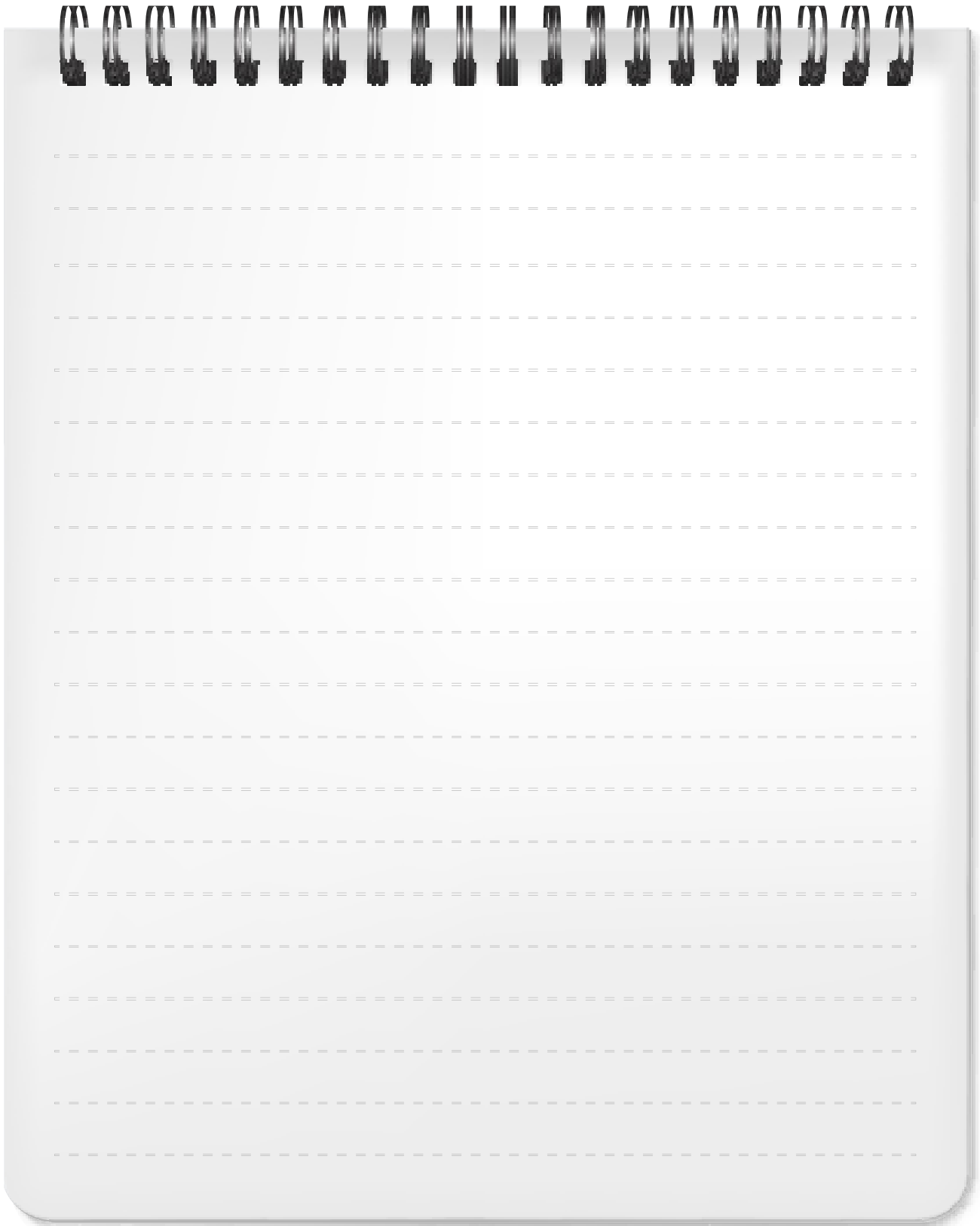
Harley Hitch



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RESOURCE SHEET 3: WHY WE NEED THE MOON – RESEARCH NOTES



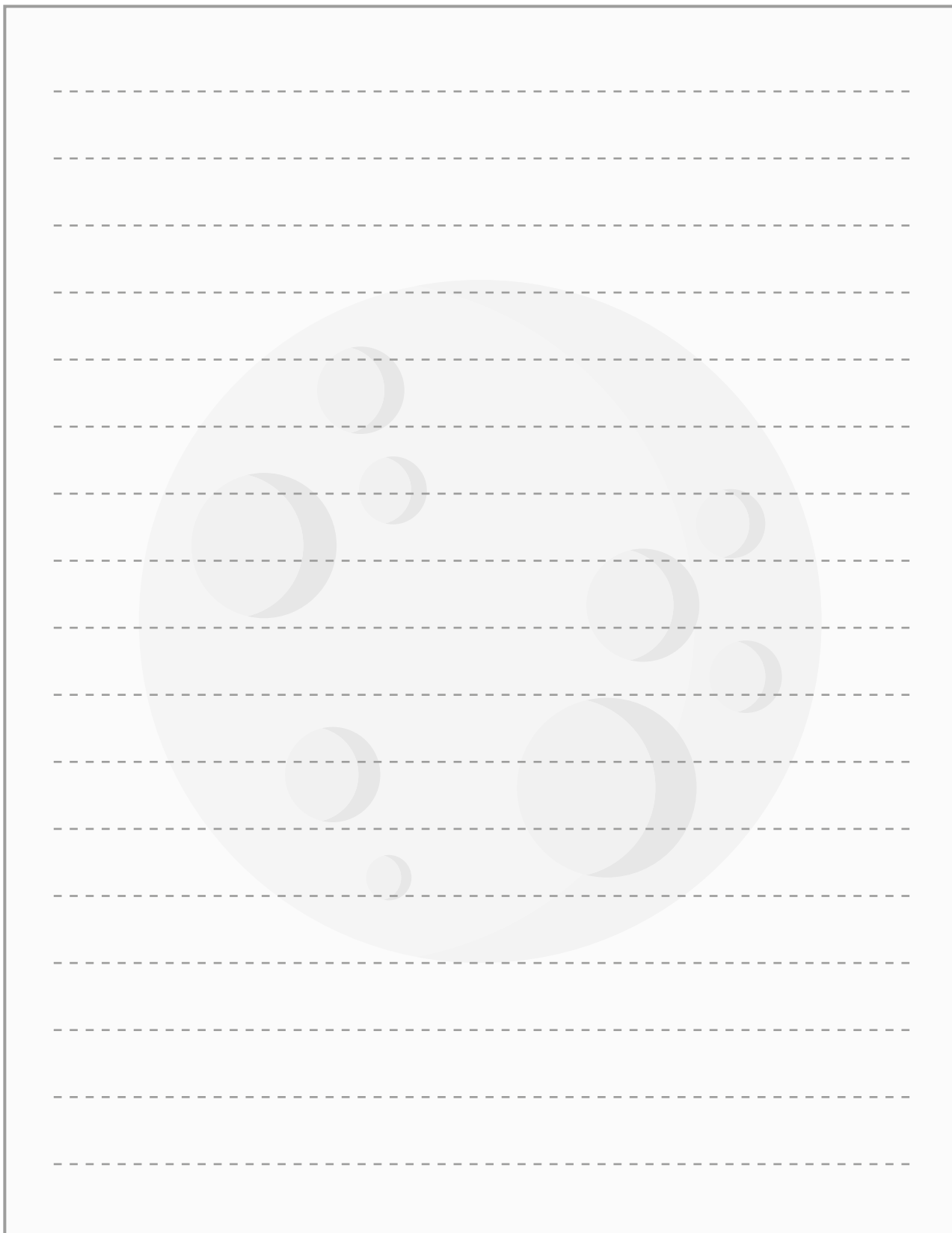
A spiral-bound notebook with a white cover and a silver metal spiral binding on the left side. The notebook is open to a blank page with horizontal dashed lines for writing. The notebook is set against a background of a red curtain with gold stars and a gold border.



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RESOURCE SHEET 4: A LETTER TO LUNA MOON



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