**PRACTICE WITH PATTERNS OF ORGANIZATION**

1.

 There are several different theories about the origin of the Moon. One theory, called the fission' theory, states that early in the life of Earth, a piece broke off, and that piece became the Moon. A second, closely related theory is that the Moon is composed of several pieces of Earth that broke away from our planet. Yet another theory is that the Moon formed elsewhere in the solar system and was captured by Earth's gravity.' The final theory states that a huge piece of planetary rock struck Earth and broke up into pieces. One of the pieces became the Moon.

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2.

 Close-up study of the planet Mars began when rockets were developed that could send scientific instruments into space. In 1965, the first observations of Mars were done by the American spacecraft Mariner 4, which flew near the planet to collect data and take photographs. Four years later, more data and photographs were collected by Mariners 6 and 7 as they flew past the planet. Then, in 1971, Mariner 9 actually went into orbit' around Mars, and during the following eleven months, sent back more than 7,000 images before contact with the spacecraft was lost. The next major step, in 1976, was the landing of two Viking crafts on two different areas of Mars' surface. These landers were able to send hack important data about the atmosphere 2 of the planet.

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3.

 Earth differs greatly from its two closest neighboring planets, Venus and Mars. The Venusian and Martian atmospheres are composed almost entirely of carbon dioxide, while Earth's atmosphere contains very little. The dominant material in our atmosphere is nitrogen (77 percent). The other major component of Earth's atmosphere is oxygen (21 percent), a gas that is almost nonexistent on Venus and Mars. Our planet has an abundance' of water, which covers about 70 percent of Earth's surface and supports life on our planet. In contrast, Venus and Mars are extremely dry planets and incapable of supporting life.

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4.

 Not all stars are the same age, so it is possible to see stars at every stage of their life cycle. From their observations, astrophysicists can explain the process of the formation of a star. A star begins life inside a nebula, a huge cloud of gas and dust in outer space. Over time, the force of gravity pulls some of the gas and dust together to form into clumps. Then the temperature inside the nebula begins to rise. Next, several clumps come together and become denser and hotter, and they form a protostar (an early form of a star). After that, the protostar continues to grow until it has become about as large as our Sun. At that point, nuclear reactions begin to occur in its core (center), and these reactions send energy to the surface of the protostar. Finally, the energy escapes as heat and light and a new star begins to shine.

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5.

 Astronomy and astrology are similar in some ways, but they differ in a very important way. In both fields, the experts study planetary motion and constellations (groups of stars), and they use telescopes, tables, and charts to do their work. However, astronomers study the heavenly bodies as a science, and over the years people have used astronomy to discover more about the universe. Astrologers, on the other hand, use their knowledge of the heavenly bodies to advise people about their life situations. This is not science, but a belief that what happens in our lives is affected by the positions of the moon, sun, and planets.

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6.

 In 2003, two robotic rovers landed on Mars and began sending back data about the possible existence of water on the red planet. This close examination of Mars was the result of new and improved technology. Because of advances in telecommunication systems, scientists on Earth can send commands faster and receive data in greater amounts. New software in the rovers led to their increased ability to make independent decisions and avoid dangers and hazards on their own. As a result of new technologies for severe environments, the rovers and their interior computers were able to survive the extreme cold and hot conditions in space and on Mars. And due to their new improved wheels the twin rovers could move around the rocky Martian landscape with ease.

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7.

 A solar eclipse is an astronomical event during which the Moon seems to cover the Sun. When the Moon passes between the Earth and the Sun, all or part of the Sun's light is blotted out. The Moon, in fact, is much smaller than the Sun, but it is also a great deal closer to the Earth. As a result, both the Sun and the Moon seem to be about the same size to us. During a total eclipse, the Sun, the Moon, and the Earth are all in a straight line and the Moon completely hides the Sun from view. A partial eclipse occurs when the three bodies are not exactly in a straight line. In an annular solar eclipse, the Sun is visible as a bright ring around the Moon because the Moon is farthest from the Earth.