

Script of the oral comprehension : bac blanc Terminales

NASA thinks that there could be enough water on the moon to create a lunar base and support humans living there. We already knew that there was water ice hidden on the moon's desert-like surface but now the thinking is these pockets of water, some no bigger than a penny, could be much more common and accessible than we previously thought.

Prof Paul Hayne, University of Colorado : “Ten of billions of potential ice reservoirs on the moon. And so this expands greatly the potential reservoirs of water that could be accessed for both scientific and exploration purposes.”

Scientists say that one day humans could be drinking this water, using it to grow food or splitting its molecules to make rocket fuel to help us travel deeper into space.

Dr Hannah Sargeant, Open University : “The moon is a lot smaller than here on Earth. The gravity is a lot less so it's actually more economical for us to launch missions from the surface of the moon then it would be from Earth.”

And this could be happening before the end of the century. But what does the surface of the moon look like right now?

Mountains, valleys, dormant volcanoes and planes of solidified lava. You can't step on the moon without treading on a crater. That's because it's constantly being bombarded by things like asteroids and meteoroids and comets, and they've been hitting the moon for billions of years. And because the moon has no atmosphere, once a mark is made almost nothing can remove it. And then let's not forget about all the things humans have left behind over the years.

Dr Hannah Sargeant, Open University : “We are explorers we're looking to go live on the moon and do a lot of science that we couldn't achieve on the shorter missions, of say the Apollo era, and then hopefully use the moon as a launch pad to take us onwards deeper into the solar system, to say Mars.

Nasa announcement: What is on the Moon? – BBC News, October 2020.