DAILY Warm-Up 15 Name _____ Date _____

THE ASTEROID BELT

An asteroid is a piece of rock. Most asteroids are made of rock, with some parts being nickel and iron. Many people say that an asteroid is what was leftover after the planets were formed. These rocks orbit around the sun.

Most of these asteroids are orbiting between Mars and Jupiter. This is known as the asteroid belt. It circulates as a belt of rocks around the sun. Sometimes these rocks run into one another. This changes their course and can break them into smaller pieces.

Some experts believe that these floating asteroids were actually part of another planet that never formed. Some experts call them "minor planets." It is said that if all of the asteroids were pulled together to form a planet, it would not be much bigger than the moon. If one of these asteroids gets into the gravitational pull of a planet, it will orbit it like a moon would.

There have been times when an asteroid has fallen into Earth's gravitational field and crashed into Earth, but this is very rare.

STORY QUESTIONS

1. Why does the author say that an asteroid hitting Earth is rare?
   a. It happens quite frequently.
   b. It can cause a lot of damage.
   c. It doesn't happen very often.
   d. It can be tracked using satellite photos.

2. What is the main idea of the second paragraph?
   a. what the asteroid belt is made up of
   b. the relationship between Mars and Jupiter
   c. what happens when an asteroid gets in the gravity of a planet
   d. the fact that an asteroid is a piece of a planet

3. What is the meaning of the term "minor planets" in the third paragraph?
   a. smaller or lesser
   b. unconcerned
   c. bothered
   d. unsettled

4. Most asteroids are made of . . .
   a. planets.
   b. stars.
   c. air.
   d. rock.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS