

BACK TO THE MOON

Read the text and choose the correct word.

The Apollo space program was, (0)_____ doubt, a great achievement. IN the period (1)_____ 1969 and 1972, it managed to land a dozen astronauts on the surface of the moon. Space scientists, (2)_____ have two big regrets about the Apollo space missions. Firstly, the program ended abruptly, with so (3)_____ of the moon still unexplored, and secondly, (4)_____ great triumph of the Apollo landings (5)_____ to a popular misconception. Everyone seemed to think that because astronauts had now visited the moon, (6)_____ was no urgent reason to (7)_____ back.

Then, in the 1990s, two space probes called Clementine and Lunar Prospector, orbited the moon and created new interest. One discovery they (8)_____ was that there might be water ice in the dark areas close to the moon's poles. Scientists believe that comets deposited water (9)_____ both Earth and its moon, so well-preserved ice on the moon could provide them (10)_____ clues about the origins of life on Earth.

A few years (11)_____, when space entrepreneurship was a fashionable idea, several private companies promised to launch missions that would explore the moon and make a profit at the (12)_____ time. But so (13)_____ this "moon business" has not (14)_____ off. The main reason seems to be that commercial interests alone are unable to cover the projected \$20 million cost of (15)_____ a mission.

