



Chapter 2 · Earth Monsters!

King Crackon's crazy driving has led the Zargians down to Earth, where they land in a most unexpected place. And who are these strange, enormous monsters?

THE GREAT SPACE RACE

Jan Burchett and Sara Vogler

CONTENT



READ!

- **Reading comprehension questions:** 10 multiple choice questions to test text retrieval and reading comprehension. These questions may also be completed online at www.fictionexpress.co.uk
- **Guided reading:** teacher's notes and a written response worksheet comprising 6 questions which allow for deeper response to the story, looking at personal response, inference and prediction



WRITE!

- **"Inspire!" words** to encourage children to include them in their own writing
- **Writing worksheet:** draw and write a new scene
- **Grammar worksheet:** statements, commands and questions



TALK!

- **Voting options:** discussion points for each voting option
- **Discussion activity:** asking questions about the book's setting (link to writing)



EXPLORE!

- **Find out about the setting**



Name: _____

1

What is the white thing with a tail?

- A. A mouse
- B. A comet
- C. The Moon

2

What does Crackon want to do to the comet?

- A. Shrink it
- B. Blast it
- C. Chase it

3

What is the blue and green planet?

- A. The Moon
- B. Planet Zarg
- C. The Earth

4

Where does Crackon's spaceship land?

- A. Beside the rocket
- B. Underneath the rocket
- C. Inside the rocket

5

Why don't the Earthling astronauts notice Crackon's spaceship?

- A. It is underneath a chair
- B. It is invisible
- C. They think it is a toy



Name: _____

6

Where is the rocket going?

- A. To planet Zarg
- B. To the Moon
- C. To Earth

7

Why does the rocket start shaking?

- A. It's about to take off
- B. There is an earthquake
- C. The rocket is being attacked

8

What happens when the rocket starts orbiting the Earth?

- A. The Zargians look out of the window
- B. The Earthlings take a nap
- C. The Zargians start to float

9

Why is Crackon cross with the Earthlings?

- A. They are laughing at him
- B. They are attacking him
- C. They are ignoring him

10

Why does Mag think it is a bad idea for Crackon to talk to the Earthlings?

- A. The Earthlings look hungry and might eat him
- B. The Earthlings have never seen a Zargian
- C. The air outside Crackon's spaceship will be poisonous



- 1** Recap on the events of Chapter 1. Ask: Where is Crackon going in his spaceship? (He wants to collect the Earth's moon before the astronauts stand on it.) Ask: What did we learn about Crackon in the last chapter? (He is bossy, he creates chaos, he thinks he's brilliant but he is not.) Read up to "*That's planet Earth,*" protested Dibble. Ask: Who are Mag and Dibble? (Crackon's servants who did not want to come on an adventure with their accident-prone king.)
- 2** Challenge the children to find the silly things that Crackon does in this section. (He orders the comet to get out of the way, he nearly shrinks their spaceship, he nearly crashes the spaceship into the comet.) Explain what a comet is and look at images of them together. Find the main mass and the tail. Ask: Why does Crackon say "*I've saved us!*"? (He thinks he's amazing.) Find words for speed and movement: *accelerate, shoved, collision course, soared up, loop-the-loop, Whoosh! whizzed.*
- 3** Ask the children to imagine what the Earth looks like from space. Look at images of the Earth from space and agree that it does look blue and green. Read up to "*We're in their rocket.*" Look at images of Apollo 11 about to take off. Explain which part of the rocket has the capsule in it. If possible, watch footage of the rocket launching into space and pictures of the astronauts inside the capsule. What is the surprising thing here? (The fact that Crackon and his spaceship are very small!) Ask: How does this make Crackon seem? (even more silly.)
- 4** Find the verbs and other words that show how the spaceship crashes inside the rocket. (For example: *clatter, slid, bounced, got wedged*) Ask the children to imagine how this scene would be filmed in a cartoon. Ask: Why does Crackon fall over? (because he has been kicking the spaceship) Ask: What does the word 'loomed' suggest? (That the astronauts are scary to the Zargians.)
- 5** Read up to *We have lift off!* Why does Crackon change his mind about being cross about the rocket? (When he hears the rocket is going to the Moon, he pretends it was his plan.) How do we know that Crackon is scared? (he yelps, he dives under his spaceship) Ask: Who do you think is talking at the end of this section? (Mission control) Why is the voice so loud to the Zargians? (The Zargian ears are small.)
- 6** Read to the end of the story. What happens when the rocket takes off? (The Zargians start to float.) Why do you think they didn't float before? (Because they were safe in their spaceship.) Ask: What do you think would happen if Crackon went up to the astronauts? (possibly laugh, possibly be surprised, definitely be shocked) Do you think they would do what he orders? (probably not) Ask: What do you think is going to happen next? What do you think he might shrink with his lunar zapper?



Name: _____

1

What is Crackon like?

2

Who makes the spaceship go into a loop-the-loop?

3

Why is Crackon and his spaceship able to fit under the seat?



Name: _____

4

Find and copy verbs that show how the spaceship crashes around the rocket.

5

What do you think an 'intergalactic translator' is?

6

Do you think that the astronauts would be frightened of Crackon? Explain why.



Here is some of the challenging or potentially unfamiliar vocabulary used in Chapter 2 of *The Great Space Race*.

You may wish to explore this vocabulary, to improve children's understanding of the chapter, and inspire and enhance the quality of their own writing. You might like to display the words in the classroom, and encourage children to use new vocabulary as part of the Write! worksheet tasks.

accelerate

bellowed

boldly

boomed

loomed

towered



Name: _____

Draw a picture for a new scene in this chapter, or for one of the voting options for the next chapter, and write a paragraph for this scene.



Name: _____

Rewrite these sentences, turning each one into a question, command or statement, and write it on the line below.

Don't forget the punctuation you will need at the end of your sentence.

1

Can you shrink it with your zapper?

[COMMAND]

2

Get out of my way!

[QUESTION]

3

Have I saved the spaceship?

[STATEMENT]

4

Take me there at once!

[QUESTION]

5

Mag and Dibble rushed to pick him up.

[COMMAND]

6

Do not take off, Earthlings!

[STATEMENT]



How do Dibble and Mag try to stop him?

A

They grab him with their rock grabbing grapppler and pull him back down

What is a rock grabbing grapppler? Do you think they might hurt King Crackon if they do this? But will this be safer than him floating away and being spotted by the human astronauts? Can you think what might go wrong with this plan?

B

Dibble shoots shaving foam at Crackon to camouflage him

Where do you think Dibble might have got some shaving foam? Do you think he even knows what it is? Will the shaving foam just float around the rocket or will it reach King Crackon? And do you think the astronauts will notice? What might they think a floating blob of foam is?

C

Mag launches herself up to turn all the lights off

Mag is a whizz at space rockets, so perhaps she will know which switch she needs to turn off the lights. But what other switch might she hit and what might it cause to happen? And if she turns off the lights, how will they know where King Crackon has floated to?

→ Which option do you think would be the most exciting one for the next chapter of *The Great Space Race*?

Discussion Activity

In pairs or a small group, discuss what has happened in the story so far. What do you think about the King Crackon now? Has your opinion of him changed? What about Mag and Dibble – do they seem any different from the first chapter? Do you think we will hear more about the astronauts, and can you find out their names, using the Explore! activity? Think about how the characters might develop as we continue the story.



Name: _____

Using books or the Internet, find out an interesting fact or write a descriptive noun phrase to go with the pictures below from the Apollo 11 space mission.



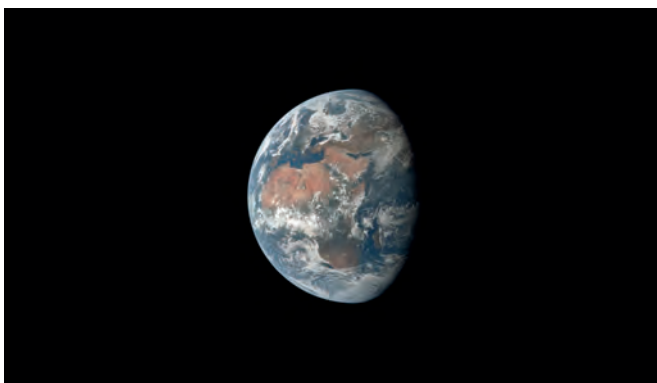
The crew of Apollo 11

Four horizontal lines for writing, enclosed in a dashed blue border.



The launch of the rocket into orbit

Four horizontal lines for writing, enclosed in a dashed blue border.



A view of Earth seen on Apollo 11

Four horizontal lines for writing, enclosed in a dashed blue border.

ANSWERS

READ! Comprehension Questions

1. What is the white thing with a tail?
B. A comet
2. What does Crackon want to do to the comet?
A. Shrink it
3. What is the blue and green planet?
C. The Earth
4. Where does Crackon's spaceship land?
C. Inside the rocket
5. Why don't the Earthling astronauts notice Crackon's spaceship?
A. It is underneath a chair
6. Where is the rocket going?
B. To the Moon
7. Why does the rocket start shaking?
A. It's about to take off
8. What happens when the rocket starts orbiting the Earth?
C. The Zargians start to float
9. Why is Crackon cross with the Earthlings?
C. They are ignoring him
10. Why does Mag think it is a bad idea for Crackon to talk to the Earthlings?
B. The Earthlings have never seen a Zargian

READ! Written Response Worksheet

1. He is bossy and self-centred; he thinks he's amazing
2. Mag
3. The Zargians and their spaceship are very small.
4. hit, slid, tumbled, bounced
5. something that translates galactic languages
6. Probably not because he is much smaller than them

WRITE! Worksheet: Statements, commands and questions

1. Shrink it with your zapper!
2. Can you get out of my way?
3. I have saved the spaceship.
4. Will you take me there at once?
5. Rush to pick him up, Mag and Dibble!
6. The Earthlings did not take off.

EXPLORE! Find out about

Possible answers could include:

The crew of Apollo 11 – the crew included Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins. Only Neil and Buzz walked on the Moon while Michael orbited it

The launch of the rocket into orbit – the rocket needed to reach great speeds to break out of the Earth's atmosphere. The Apollo 11 flight used a *Saturn V* rocket.

A view of Earth seen on Apollo 11 - the views of Earth that humankind saw from the Apollo missions made them realise how precious our planet is, leading to people thinking about protecting it the environment.

Photo credits: Saturn V rocket used in Apollo 11: By NASA - Great Images in NASA Description, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6448915>; the crew of Apollo 11: By NASA - NASA Human Space Flight Gallery (image link), Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=102412>; a view of Earth from Apollo 11: By NASA - <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/pao/History/alsj/a11/AS11-36-5355HR.jpg>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=18305161>