The Space Desk

Answer key

Why the Moon seems to change

The Moon does not make its own light. It reflects sunlight. As the Moon travels around Earth, we see different amounts of its sunlit side. These changing views are called phases. The cycle from one new Moon to the next takes about 29.5 days.

Answers

1. Where does moonlight come from?

It is sunlight reflected by the Moon. The article says the Moon reflects sunlight, rather than making its own light. See: “It reflects sunlight.”

2. What do we call the changing views of the Moon?

They are called phases. As the Moon travels around Earth, we see different amounts of its sunlit side; those views are called phases. See: “These changing views are called phases.”

3. About how long is a cycle from one new Moon to the next?

About 29.5 days. The last sentence gives about 29.5 days for a new-Moon-to-new-Moon cycle. See: “The cycle from one new Moon to the next takes about 29.5 days.”

Source: NASA: Moon Phases (checked 27 November 2026)
https://science.nasa.gov/moon/moon-phases/