

Some people believe that unidentified flying objects (or UFOs) exist, while other people think that these 'unidentified' objects can be easily explained. In this article, the writer provides a perspective on this topic.

Evidence of UFOs

Unidentified flying objects (UFOs) exist. People have seen things in the sky and they cannot explain them. UFOs have been seen, photographed and filmed by astronauts, airline pilots, police officers, **astronomers**, and farmers. Unfortunately, people are usually on their own when they see a UFO, so there is nobody to **back up their story**.

In 1947, the term 'flying saucer' was introduced to describe these mysterious objects. But the mystery remains. What are they and where do they come from?

Many different theories have been put forward to explain the worldwide sightings of discs, egg shapes, **spheres** and other **oddly** shaped objects in the sky. They have been explained as: unusual cloud formations, fireballs, meteorites, weather balloons, **optical illusions** or **fabrications**. Some of these strange sightings have been explained in this way, but not every one. We should accept that people have seen something. But what?

People who study UFO sightings (ufologists) are **convinced** that the

The first flying saucer

The flying saucer story began on 24th June 1947. A pilot, Kenneth Arnold, was searching for a missing transport plane. He saw nine disc-shaped objects flying over Mount Rainer in the USA. He described the objects as 'flying like a saucer would if you **skimmed** it across water'. Newspapers picked up the story and labelled the objects as 'flying saucers'.



Earth is being watched by beings from other planets. If this is the case, why are they watching us and what do they want? Ufologists believe it is **only a matter of time** before these **extra-terrestrials** **make contact with us**. Until then, many people will continue to look for a **simpler** explanation for the strange objects in the sky.

Glossary

astronomers people who study the stars and the planets
optical illusions things that look very different from what they actually are
fabrications inventions or exaggerations
extra-terrestrials beings from outer space
antennae aerials for receiving signals

Astronauts sight UFOs!

It is not only people on Earth or in planes who have seen UFOs. Since the 1960s, many astronauts have reported seeing UFOs. United States astronaut, James McDivitt, claimed that he saw a UFO in June 1965. While in **orbit**, about 145km above the Earth, McDivitt, saw a cylindrical object with arms sticking out of it, which he took to be another spacecraft with **antennae**. He and his fellow astronaut, Ed White, were preparing to **take evasive action** when the UFOs disappeared from view.

Word Check

Use a dictionary to help you.



A Find each word in the text. Choose the correct meaning.

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 spheres | a round objects | b planets |
| 2 oddly | a dangerously | b strangely |
| 3 convinced | a unsure | b sure |
| 4 simpler | a more ordinary | b more extraordinary |
| 5 skimmed | a moved over the surface | b dropped |
| 6 orbit | a movement around something | b movement away from something |

B Find these phrases in the text. Discuss what they mean.

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 back up their story | 2 only a matter of time |
| 3 make contact with us | 4 take evasive action |

Grammar

Single and multi-clause sentences

A **sentence** can sometimes be made up of **one main clause**. This is called a **simple sentence**.

Unidentified flying objects exist.

A sentence can be made up of **two or more main clauses** joined by conjunctions (for example: **and**, **but**, **or**).

These are called **multi-clause sentences** or **compound sentences**.

People have seen things in the sky **and** they cannot explain them.

main clause 1: People have seen things in the sky.

main clause 2: They cannot explain them.

- A** Copy these **multi-clause** sentences. Underline the **two main clauses** in each sentence. Circle the **conjunction**.

- 1 The ufologist had his camera but he forgot to take a photograph.
- 2 UFOs have been seen in the sky and people have photographed them.
- 3 Was that a UFO or was it a meteorite?



- B** For each question, use a **conjunction** to make the two separate sentences into **one multi-clause sentence**.

You can use **and**, **but**, or.



- 1 There are clouds in the sky. It isn't raining.
- 2 I saw something strange. I don't know what it was.
- 3 Kenneth Arnold was a pilot. He saw a UFO.
- 4 He might have seen a UFO. He might have seen a weather balloon.

- C** Copy and complete these simple sentences by adding a **conjunction** and a **main clause** of your own.

- 1 The flying saucer landed _____.
- 2 The meteorite came close to Earth _____.
- 3 The photograph was quite blurred _____.
- 4 That could be a strange cloud formation _____.

Writing

Writing to persuade

When you are trying to persuade your reader, you need to include evidence that supports your opinion.

You also need to provide evidence that supports the opposite view but then include information that proves this evidence is wrong.

The writer of the extract about UFOs on **pages 38 and 39** obviously believes that UFOs exist and tries to **persuade** the reader to agree by:

- listing the various sorts of people who have seen UFOs
- listing the other things that UFOs could be, but pointing out that not all UFO sightings can be explained in those ways
- using evidence from pilots and astronauts.

- 1 You are going to write a report that supports one side of an argument.

Choose **one** of the following questions:

- Is there life on other planets?
- Should students have to wear a school uniform?
- Are video games bad for children?



- a Decide which side of the argument you are on:

- There is life on other planets.
- Students should have to wear a uniform.
- Video games are bad for children.

OR

- Life does not exist on other planets.
- Students should not have to wear a uniform.
- Video games are good for children.

- b Write a report which:

- supports your side of the argument
- includes the opposite point of view so you can prove this to be wrong.

Think about the sort of things somebody with the **opposite point of view** might say, and try to find ways of arguing against their points.

