

# The man who sold the Moon

Have you ever wasted money on something? For example, a gym membership you hardly used.

## Vocabulary

1. banned      2. promptly      3. treaty      4. oversight      5. thrives      6. certificate

## True Story

In 1980, an out-of-work American named Dennis Hope discovered an odd gap in international space law. The United Nations \_\_\_\_\_ countries from owning planets, but forgot to mention ordinary people. Taking advantage of the \_\_\_\_\_, Hope \_\_\_\_\_ claimed the Moon and opened a business selling lunar land for around twenty dollars an acre.

Each buyer received an official-looking \_\_\_\_\_, a lunar map, and mineral rights. Amazingly, his bizarre company has sold plots to over six million customers, including Hollywood celebrities and three former US presidents. Lawyers argue the documents are completely worthless, yet the lunar business continues to thrive.

## Quiz

1. What did Dennis Hope discover in 1980?
2. How much did Dennis Hope charge for an acre of lunar land?
3. Who are some of the people that bought lunar land from Dennis Hope?
4. What do lawyers say about the documents Hope provides?

## True or False

- |                                                                    |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Dennis Hope was a lawyer before claiming the Moon.              | True   False |
| 2. The United Nations treaty banned countries from owning planets. | True   False |
| 3. Over six million customers have bought lunar land.              | True   False |

## Conversation

- A: Hey Dennis, did you really sell the Moon?
- B: Yep, and business is booming!
- A: How do people react when you tell them?
- B: They usually laugh, then ask for a plot next to a celebrity.
- A: Do you think anyone will ever live there?
- B: Who knows? But if they do, I hope they pay rent!

## Discussion

1. Have you ever wanted to visit space or the Moon? Why or why not?
2. Would you buy a cheap piece of land on the Moon as a joke or a gift?
3. Do you think human beings will actually live on the Moon one day?
4. Who do you think should own the Moon: the United Nations, private companies, or nobody?