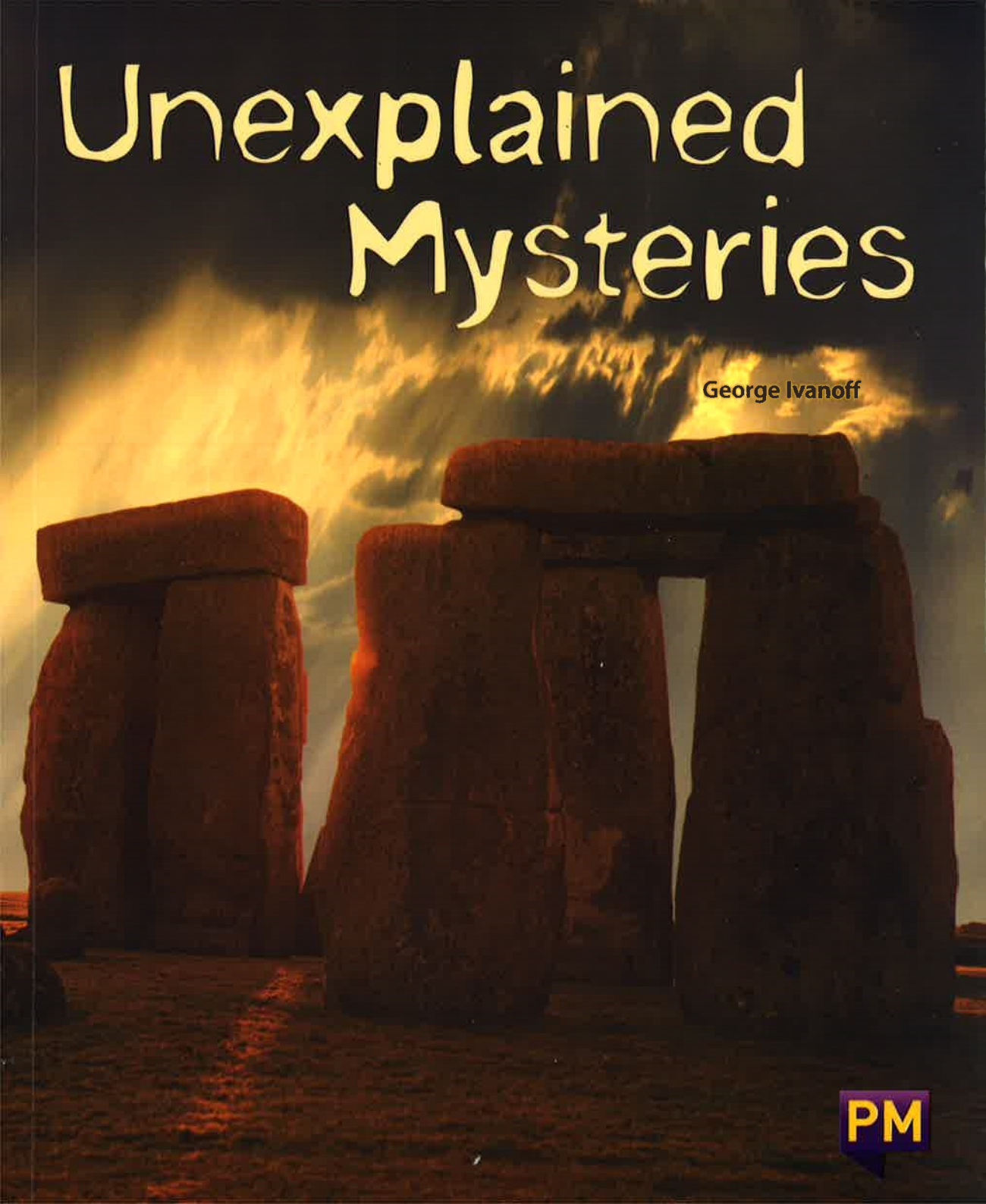
Unexplained Mysteries

George Ivanoff



PM

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Unexplained Mysteries

Level 30

Running Words 3217 **Text Type** Information Report (Informative)

Curriculum Areas Humanities – History; Science

Think and Talk About …

Fact boxes in the book encourage each student to explore the statements further and to share the information with others.

Oral Literacy Focus for Students

Key issues from the text to encourage critical thinking and stimulate group discussions:

1 Establish why scientists and astronomers are hoping to discover if there is intelligent life beyond Earth.
2 Explain why kites could have been mistaken for UFOs.
3 Research further information about the sea floor of the Dragon's Triangle below the coast of Japan.
4 Suggest another reason why the crew of the *Mary Celeste* abandoned the ship.
5 With the permission of your teacher, organise a visit to a planetarium or a visit from an astronomer.

Written Literacy Focus for Students

Key issue from the text to present in visual and written form to an audience:

1 Research the topic 'Aliens'.
2 Prepare a reader's theatre play about aliens landing near your school.
3 Edit and revise the text. Design and make costumes for the play.
4 Practise the play and then present it at a school assembly.
5 Critically evaluate the audience's reaction to the mysterious content of the play

Links with other PM Guided Reading Books and Cards

Level 29	Book	Information Report/Exposition	*The Amazon Rainforest*
Level 30	Book	Information Report/Recount	*Explosive Volcanoes*
Level 30	Book	Information Report/Explanation	*Space Technology in Space and on Earth*

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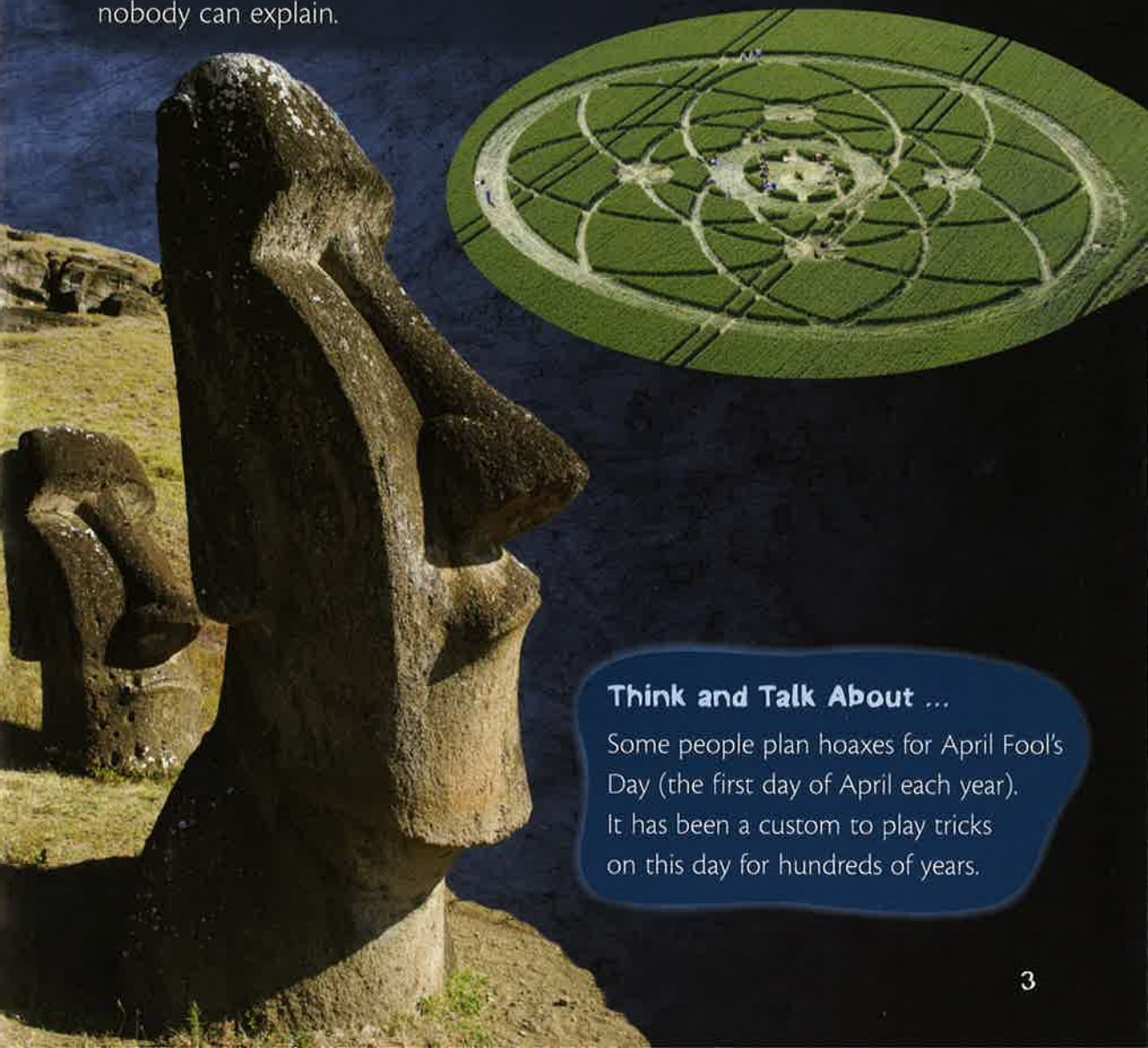
What Are Unexplained Mysteries?

An unexplained mystery is a very unusual event or **circumstance** that cannot be readily explained by science or reason. People are fascinated by unexplained mysteries. Throughout history and to this day, strange objects in the sky, monster sightings, peculiar disappearances and other **phenomena** have captured the public's imagination. Some people experience these strange events themselves, and some people find out about them through newspapers, books, television and the internet.



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But just how unexplained are these mysteries? Over time, some mysteries have been solved. There are other mysteries for which researchers have **plausible** theories, but these theories have yet to be proven. Sometimes, the mystery is just a **hoax** – a trick thought up by somebody to fool or baffle others. And some mysteries may always remain mysteries, which nobody can explain.



Think and Talk About ...

Some people plan hoaxes for April Fool's Day (the first day of April each year). It has been a custom to play tricks on this day for hundreds of years.

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Space Mysteries

Is Anyone Out There?

Is there life beyond planet Earth? This is one of the greatest unexplained mysteries facing the human race. It is a question that scientists have been trying to answer for decades.

In 2015, British scientist Stephen Hawking, along with Russian **physicist** Yuri Milner, started the biggest ever scientific search for signs of **extraterrestrial** life in the universe. The project, known as *Breakthrough Listen*, is a ten-year-long study that uses powerful telescopes to search for signals and messages from the one million stars closest to Earth. Scientists and astronomers around the world are hoping this study will provide an answer to the mystery of whether there is intelligent life beyond Earth.



The Parkes radio telescope, in Parkes, New South Wales, Australia, is one of the telescopes scanning the stars for extraterrestrial life.

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This unidentified object was photographed in the sky in South Korea in 2011.

Unidentified Flying Objects

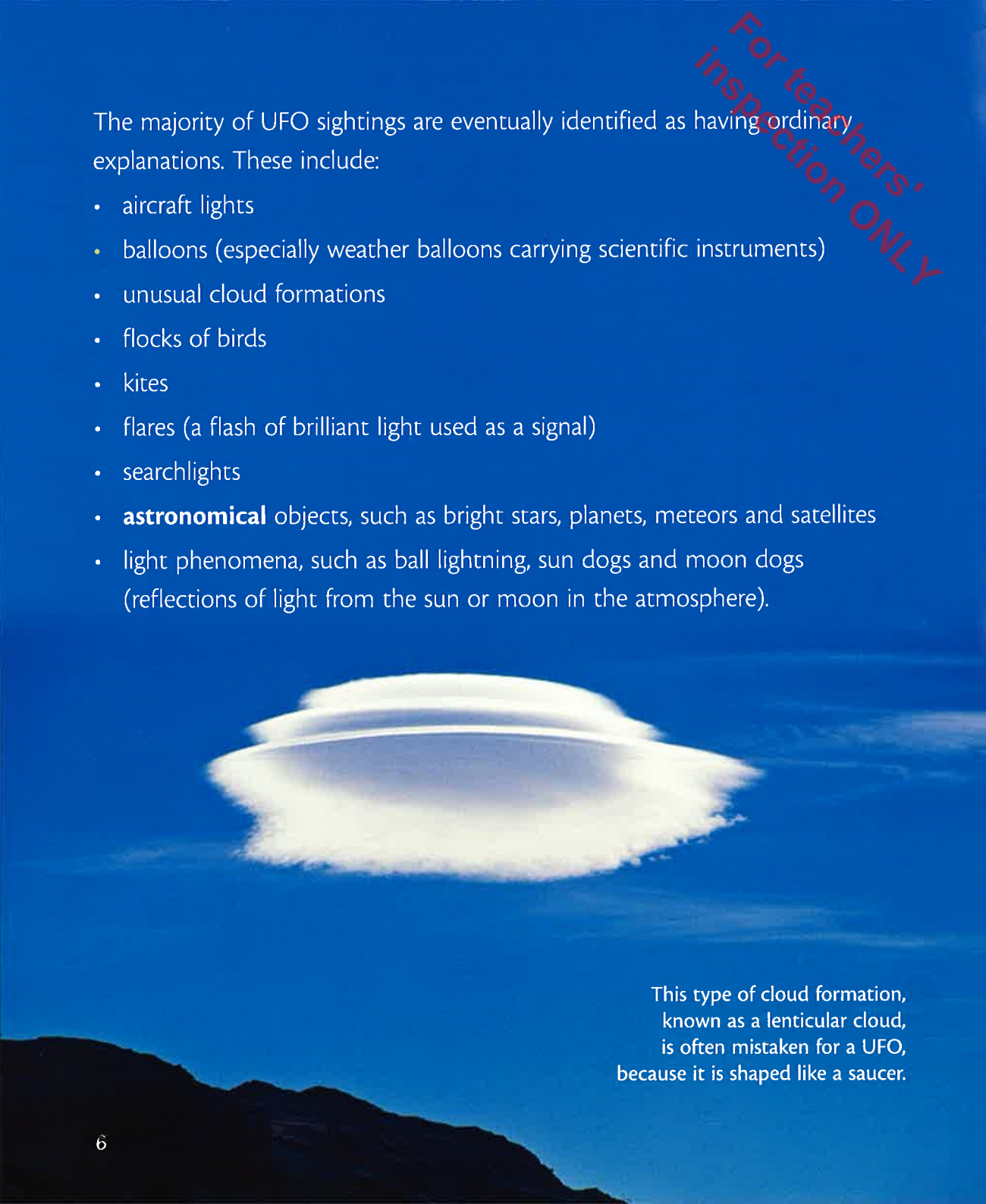
An unidentified flying object (or UFO) is a strange object seen in the sky that cannot be explained by the person who sees it. Descriptions of UFOs have included coloured balls of light, disc-shaped objects or glowing wheel-shaped objects in the sky. UFOs are sometimes referred to as "flying saucers". Many people are convinced that UFOs are actually alien spaceships visiting Earth.

There have been numerous investigations into UFOs throughout the years. The best known is the United States Air Force's investigation called "Project Blue Book". The investigation was conducted from 1952 to 1969. Scientists working on the project examined thousands of reported UFO sightings. It eventually concluded that there was no evidence that any UFO was of extraterrestrial origin.

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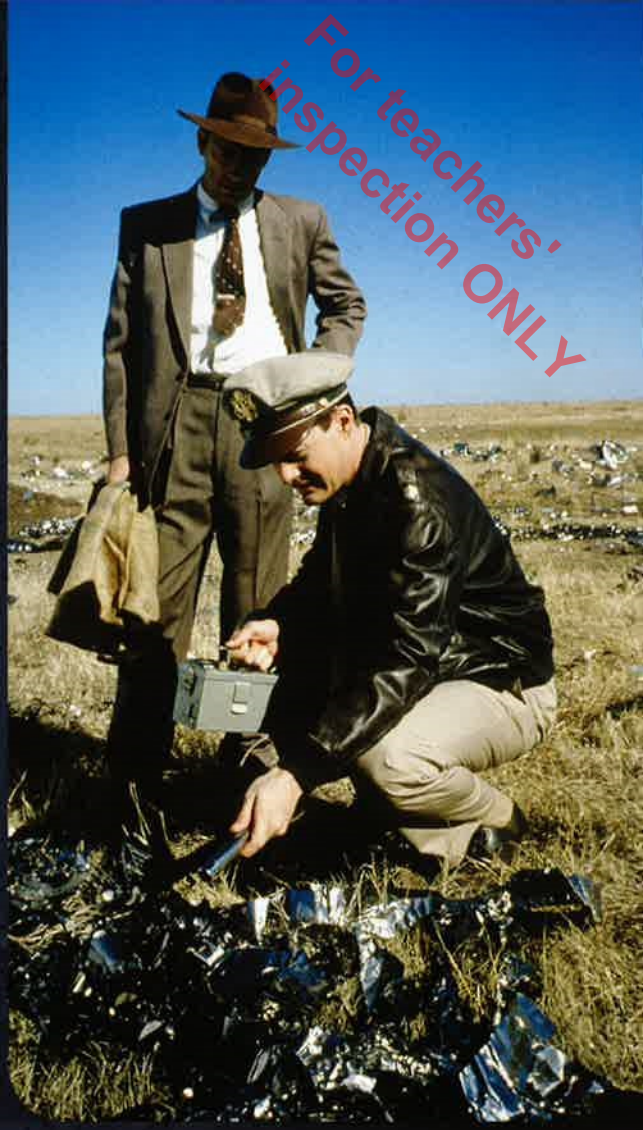
The majority of UFO sightings are eventually identified as having ordinary explanations. These include:

- aircraft lights
- balloons (especially weather balloons carrying scientific instruments)
- unusual cloud formations
- flocks of birds
- kites
- flares (a flash of brilliant light used as a signal)
- searchlights
- **astronomical** objects, such as bright stars, planets, meteors and satellites
- light phenomena, such as ball lightning, sun dogs and moon dogs (reflections of light from the sun or moon in the atmosphere).



This type of cloud formation, known as a lenticular cloud, is often mistaken for a UFO, because it is shaped like a saucer.

There are many stories or theories about UFOs landing on Earth. One of the most famous theories is the Roswell incident. In 1947, a United States Air Force **surveillance** balloon crashed at a ranch near Roswell, New Mexico, the USA. Some people thought it was an alien spaceship, and that the government was trying to hide this information from the public. Even after the air force released all of its documents about the case, some people still believe it was a UFO crash.



Scientists look through the remains of the crashed surveillance balloon near Roswell, 1947.

Many UFO theories have centred around Area 51. Area 51 is part of the Edwards Air Force Base in Nevada, the USA, where government aircraft research has been carried out. UFO theorists claim that this is where the US Government keeps all the alien spaceships it has collected from UFO crash sites, such as Roswell.

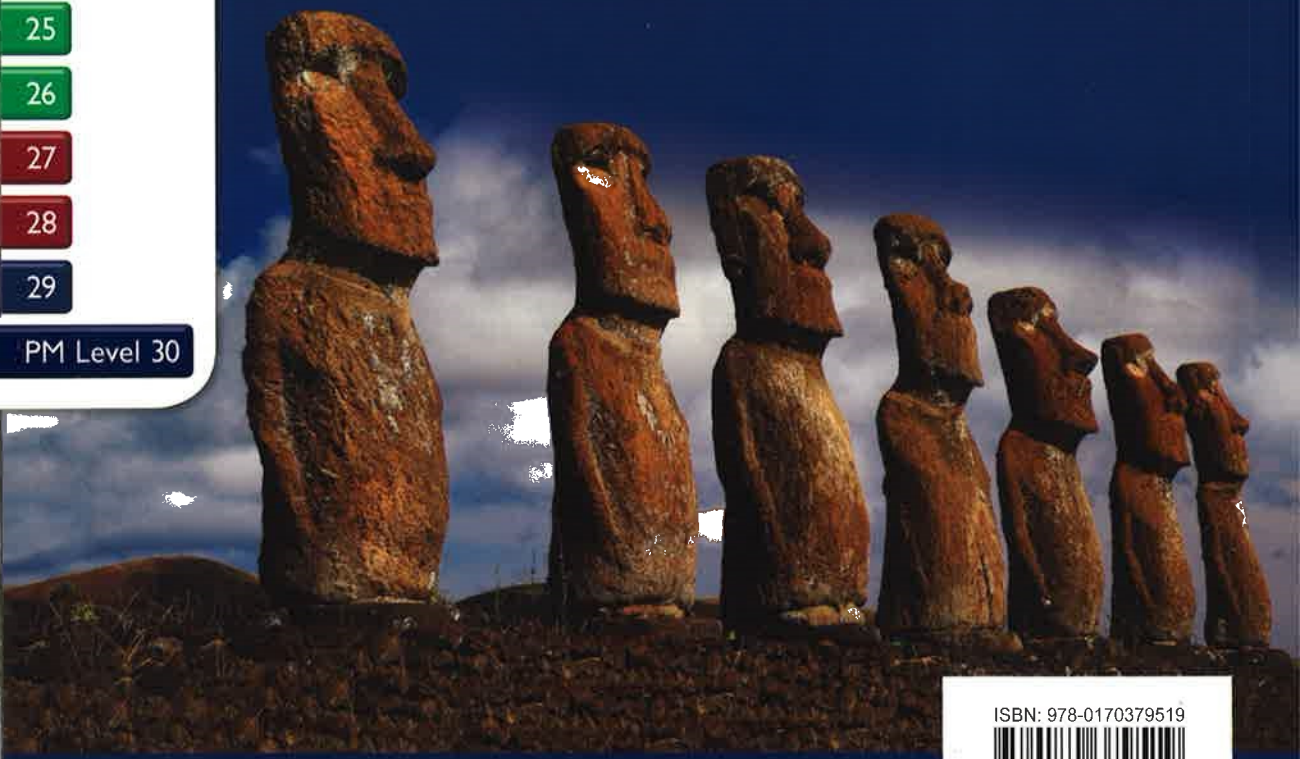
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The world is full of unexplained mysteries – unusual events that nobody can understand, and questions that nobody can answer. Do UFOs exist? Is there life on other planets? Why do some people go missing without a trace? This book explores some of the most intriguing mysteries over the years, and the theories that people have developed to explain them.



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