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Level 5 – 21st April 2025

Scientists find possible alien life in outer space

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<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2504/250421-exoplanet-k2-18b-5.html>

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Please try Levels 4 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2504/250421-exoplanet-k2-18b-5.html>

Scientists are closer to answering the question "Are we alone?" For centuries, astronomers have observed the heavens for signs of extraterrestrial life. Now, a team of astronomers say they have detected two chemicals that provide the conditions for life. An astrophysicist from the University of Cambridge announced the existence of two chemicals called DMS and DMDS. These represent the potential fingerprints of life. On Earth, the chemicals are only produced by microorganisms. DMS and DMDS are "the most promising signs yet" of life.

The two chemicals were discovered on a planet called K2-18b. This is about 124 light years from Earth. The astrophysicist believes the planet might be a Hycean world. This is a potentially habitable planet covered in liquid water. He said a Hycean world is one with an ocean "that is teeming with life". He said the data from K2-18b "best fits" that kind of world. However, he stopped short of stating that life exists on the planet. He was only 99.7% sure. He said he needed to be 99.99994% certain to state as fact that we are not alone.

Sources: <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/04/17/science/k218b-potential-biosignature-webb/index.html>
<https://www.space.com/the-universe/exoplanets/possible-signs-of-alien-life-found-on-nearby-exoplanet-study-reports>
<https://www.skyatnightmagazine.com/news/k2-18b-dimethyl-sulfide>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2504/250421-exoplanet-k2-18b-5.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Scientists are closer to | a. yet |
| 2. astronomers have observed | b. conditions for life |
| 3. signs of extraterrestrial | c. of life |
| 4. chemicals that provide the | d. the heavens |
| 5. the existence | e. by microorganisms |
| 6. the potential fingerprints | f. answering the question |
| 7. only produced | g. of two chemicals |
| 8. the most promising signs | h. life |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. discovered on a planet | a. 99.99994% certain |
| 2. This is about 124 light | b. that kind of world |
| 3. This is a potentially habitable | c. years from Earth |
| 4. an ocean that | d. fact |
| 5. the data from K2-18b best fits | e. planet |
| 6. he stopped short | f. called K2-18b |
| 7. He said he needed to be | g. is teeming with life |
| 8. state as | h. of stating that |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2504/250421-exoplanet-k2-18b-5.html>

Scientists are (1) _____ the question "Are we alone?" For centuries, astronomers have (2) _____ for signs of extraterrestrial life. Now, a team of astronomers say they have detected two chemicals that provide the (3) _____. An astrophysicist from the University of Cambridge announced (4) _____ two chemicals called DMS and DMDS. These represent the potential (5) _____. On Earth, the chemicals are only produced by microorganisms. DMS and DMDS are "the most (6) _____" of life.

The two chemicals (7) _____ a planet called K2-18b. This is about 124 light years from Earth. The astrophysicist (8) _____ might be a Hycean world. This is a potentially habitable planet (9) _____ water. He said a Hycean world is one with an ocean "that is teeming with life". He said the data from K2-18b (10) _____ kind of world. However, he stopped (11) _____ that life exists on the planet. He was only 99.7% sure. He said he needed to be 99.99994% certain to (12) _____ that we are not alone.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2504/250421-exoplanet-k2-18b-5.html>

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ALIEN LIFE SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2504/250421-exoplanet-k2-18b-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about alien life in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

