Name _____

The Many Names for the Full Moon

Sometimes, in the fall, you may hear people call a full moon the "Harvest Moon." That's because farmers can stay in their fields late, after sunset, harvesting their crops by the bright light of a full moon. Did you know that there are special names for the full moon during each month of the year?

The names for the full moon were made up by the Algonquian tribes of Native Americans. Most of the Algonquian people hunted and fished to get food, but some also grew crops. The names they had for the Moon are related to nature and the seasons, hunting and fishing, and farming. The Algonquian people lived all over the northern and eastern parts of North America. When settlers from Europe met up with them, some of the settlers started using most of the same names for the full moon.

The table below lists the names the Algonquian people used for the full moon during different months of the year.

Month	Moon name	Why that name?
January	Wolf Moon	Hungry wolf packs howled at night
February	Snow Moon	Heaviest snowfalls in the middle of winter
March	Worm Moon	Start of spring, as earthworms (and the robins that eat them!) began to appear
April	Pink Moon	An early spring flower called "moss pink" started to bloom
May	Flower Moon	Many types of flowers bloom in May
June	Strawberry Moon	Strawberries were ready to be picked and eaten
July	Buck Moon	New antlers of buck deer, coated with velvety fur, began to form
August	Sturgeon Moon	Sturgeon, large fish found in the Great Lakes, were easily caught at this time of year
September	Harvest Moon	Farmers could continue harvesting until after sunset by the light of the Harvest Moon
October	Hunter's Moon	Hunters tracked and killed prey by moonlight, stockpiling food for the coming winter
November	Beaver Moon	Time to set beaver traps before the swamps froze, to make sure of a supply of warm winter furs
December	Cold Moon	The cold of winter sets in