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# Earth's Largest Intact Meteorite Found Unmarked by Crater

## Description

The Hoba meteorite, located in Namibia, is the largest known natural iron object on Earth, weighing approximately 60 metric tons. Despite its size and the belief that such a large meteorite should have created a crater upon impact, it surprisingly did not leave one. Approximately 80,000 years ago, it entered the Earth's atmosphere but slowed down significantly due to its unique composition and shape, as well as its shallow entry angle.

The meteorite remains exactly where it fell, on a farm near Grootfontein. Its discovery in 1920 by Jacobus Hermanus Brits was somewhat accidental, as he struck the metal mass while ploughing. Initially, only a portion of the Hoba meteorite was visible above ground, with subsequent excavations revealing its enormous rectangular shape buried beneath a light soil cover.

Scientists have classified it as an "ataxite," a type of iron meteorite high in nickel content. This material, along with the meteorite's unique slab-like shape, contributed to its survival during atmospheric entry. Hoba likely weighed around 500 metric tons when it entered the atmosphere, losing almost 90% of its mass due to friction and heat.

The absence of a visible crater today may be due to erosion and the meteorite's relatively slow landing. Over the years, human activity and natural weathering have affected its mass, prompting efforts to protect the site since it was declared a national monument in 1955. Moving forward, ongoing protection measures will be essential to preserve this significant astronomical artifact.

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## Vocabulary List:

1. **meteorite** /'mi:tiə,raɪt/ (noun): a rock from space that hit Earth
2. **crater** /'kreɪtə/ (noun): a large round hole in the ground
3. **composition** /,kəmpe'zɪʃən/ (noun): what something is made of or from
4. **excavations** /,ɛkskə'veɪʃənz/ (noun): digging to find things under the ground
5. **friction** /'frɪkʃən/ (noun): force that slows moving objects when touching
6. **preserve** /prɪ'zɜ:v/ (verb): to keep something safe from damage

## Comprehension Questions



### Multiple Choice

1. Where is the Hoba meteorite located?

- Option: South Africa
- Option: Namibia
- Option: Brazil
- Option: Australia

2. How much does the Hoba meteorite weigh?

- Option: 30 metric tons
- Option: 60 metric tons
- Option: 90 metric tons
- Option: 120 metric tons

3. What type of meteorite is the Hoba classified as?

- Option: Chondrite
- Option: Ataxite
- Option: Achondrite
- Option: Iron Meteorite

4. Who discovered the Hoba meteorite?

- Option: Albert Einstein
- Option: Jacobus Hermanus Brits
- Option: Isaac Newton
- Option: Charles Darwin

5. In what year was the Hoba meteorite declared a national monument?

- Option: 1920
- Option: 1935
- Option: 1955
- Option: 1970

6. Approximately how many years ago did the Hoba meteorite enter the Earth's atmosphere?

- Option: 10,000
- Option: 50,000
- Option: 80,000
- Option: 100,000



### True-False

7. The Hoba meteorite created a large crater upon impact.
8. The Hoba meteorite is the largest known natural iron object on Earth.
9. Hoba meteorite was discovered in 1920 by accident.
10. The Hoba meteorite is high in copper content.
11. Human activity has had no effect on the Hoba meteorite's mass over the years.
12. The Hoba meteorite is currently on a farm near Grootfontein.

### Gap-Fill

13. The Hoba meteorite weighs approximately \_\_\_\_\_ metric tons.
14. Jacobus Hermanus Brits discovered the Hoba meteorite while \_\_\_\_\_ ploughing.
15. The Hoba meteorite was declared a national \_\_\_\_\_ in 1955.
16. Hoba likely weighed around \_\_\_\_\_ metric tons when it entered the atmosphere.
17. The lack of a visible crater today may be due to \_\_\_\_\_ and slow landing.
18. The Hoba meteorite is classified as an ' \_\_\_\_\_,' a type of iron meteorite.

### Answer

**Multiple Choice:** 1. Namibia 2. 60 metric tons 3. Ataxite 4. Jacobus Hermanus Brits 5. 1955 6. 80,000

**True-False:** 7. False 8. True 9. True 10. False 11. False 12. True

**Gap-Fill:** 13. 60 14. accidentally 15. monument 16. 500 17. erosion 18. ataxite

### CATEGORY

1. Sci/Tech - LEVEL4

### POST TAG

1. B2



2. crater
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