

Student Name _____ Date _____

CELEBRATING SPACE: A QUICK HISTORY

Putting the Space Age Into Context: The dawn of the space age does not date back that far in human history—only 40 years! It is so recent that you can get eye-witness accounts by asking parents, grandparents, and even teachers where they were during Alan Shepard’s launch, John Glenn’s orbit, or Neil Armstrong’s first step on the Moon.

How It Began: The first astronauts and cosmonauts went alone, stuffed into capsules barely large enough for their bodies. They ate squeeze-tube food and peered out at Earth through tiny portholes. Flights lasted only a matter of minutes or hours.

Where We Are: A lot has happened in 40 years. Today we routinely launch satellites to orbit Earth so we can learn about weather and understand our environment. We build increasingly more advanced technology to explore our Solar System and peer into the far reaches of the universe using both Earth-based and in-orbit telescopes.

Where Are We Going? The final answer to that question is up to you.

DIRECTIONS. Read through the following instructions in order to create a space exploration timeline.

Procedures

1. Look at the decades posted by your teacher. Using the milestones provided by your teacher, place the space event in the correct decade.
2. Some key milestones have been left out. As time allows, research and add more milestones using the blank template. Here are some additional milestones to get you started:
 - a. 1926 – Dr. Robert Goddard’s first liquid-fuel rocket
 - b. 1957 – Sputnik (first man-made satellite in space)
 - c. 1958 – Explorer 1 (first American satellite in space)
 - d. 1961 – Yuri Gagarin, soviet Union (first human in space)
 - e. 1962 – Mariner 2 (first robotic flyby of another planet)
 - f. 1970 – Venera 7 (first robotic landing on another planet)
 - g. 1975 – Apollo-Soyuz (first international mission in space)
 - h. 1978 – Pioneer Venus Orbiter encounter
 - i. 1981 – Voyager 2 Saturn flyby encounter
 - j. 1989 – Voyager 2 Neptune flyby encounter
3. Create futuristic milestones for the decades spanning 2010–2050. (Like returning to the Moon, colonizing Mars, etc.)

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