
ProTalk
Discussion Files
afaq
Language Center
C1. The Space Race
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www. afaq-lc.com
021-5148
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Goals

- Can read and understand a more complex text about the Space Race.
- Can present a detailled opinion on going into space and discuss the role of celebrities in society.

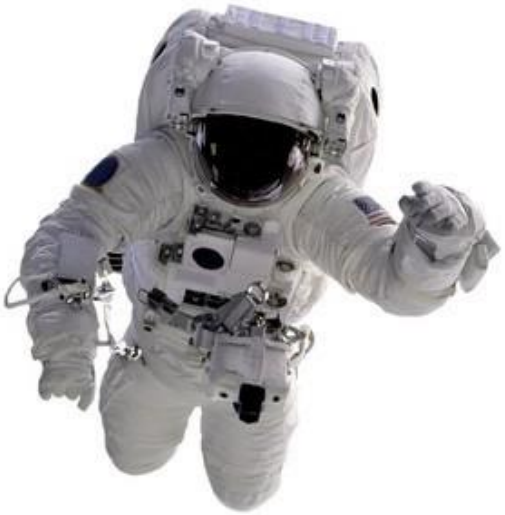


What do you think?

That evening, people around the world **gaped** open-mouthed at their television sets. Man had finally gone where no **earthly creature** had been before: the moon.

Warm up

- [ ] Have you heard the following statement before? What does it mean to you?



That's one **small step** for **man**, one **giant leap** for **mankind**.

About you



Do you have any interest in outer space, or astronomy?

Can you name all the planets of the solar system in English?

What do you already know about the Space Race? What would you like to know?

Read the text and summarize it.

Origins and the Cold War



After the Second World War ended, a new conflict began. Known as the Cold War, it was a long, tense competition between the United States and what was then the Soviet Union (also known as the USSR). Although there were no battles directly involving the two sides, there were fights between other countries supported by the US and USSR.

Read the text and summarize it.

Origins and the Cold War

The two countries were like two friends who had stopped talking to each other, but continued to compete with one another over who could be the best. However, this **feud** took place on an international scale and **involved** the collection of nuclear weapons. It also involved a competition over which side could be the first to send people to the Moon and Mars. This particular competition came to be called the **Space Race**.

Read the text and summarize it.

Origins and the Cold War

The Space Race began in 1955, when the US announced that they would send satellites into space. A few days later, the USSR announced that they, too, would be sending satellites into space. The Soviets won this initial contest by launching a satellite called Sputnik, and later another called Sputnik 2. This second satellite was carrying a special passenger: a dog named Laika. Although Laika only lived a few hours, she became the first living organism to be sent into space. Laika was followed a few years later by the first person in space. This was the Russian **astronaut** Yuri Gagarin, in 1961. The first woman in space was also from the USSR. Her name was Valentina Tereshkova.

However the US **trumped** these achievements by sending people to the moon in 1969. This expedition was led by commander Neil Armstrong. The USSR eventually stopped trying to put people on the moon, instead focusing on building space stations that **orbit** the Earth. The Americans had won the Space Race.

Vocabulary

Find the word from the text that matches each definition.

1. A large jump.
2. Describing a strain on nerves or feelings.
3. To include or contain.
4. A person whose job is to travel into space.
5. To excel, surpass or outdo.
6. To move around something in a predictable pattern.

to trump

to leap

to orbit

tense

astronaut

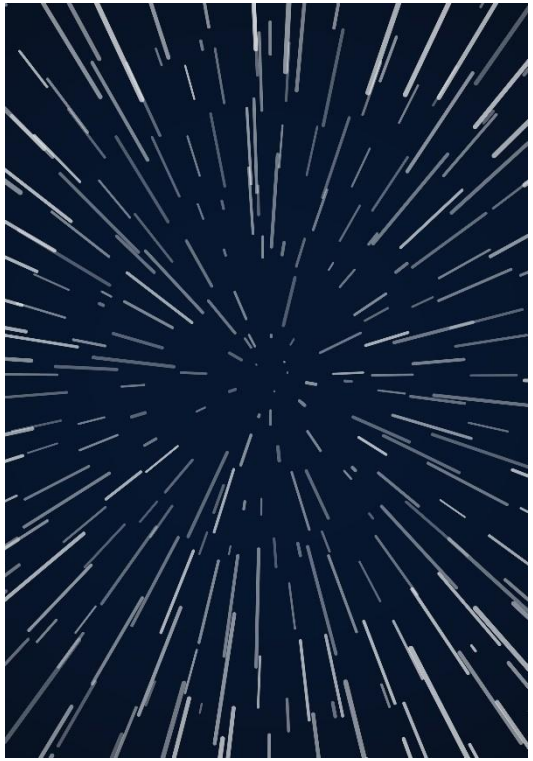
to involve

Complete the table of word families

Verb	Noun	Adjective
to leap		X
	_____	tense
to involve	_____	_____
to trump	_____	_____
to orbit	_____	_____

Discussion

Discuss these questions with your teacher or other students.



Would you go into space? Why or why not?

What would be the most difficult thing for you about going into space? What would be the most interesting?

Astronauts in the mid to late twentieth century were celebrities. Do you think this fame was justified? Why or why not?

Debate

Do you agree or disagree with the sentence below? Why or why not? Take a moment to collect your thoughts and then discuss with your teacher or group.

> The Space Race was a waste of time for both the United States and the Soviet Union.

Over to you



What do you think of the idea of astronauts as celebrities? Is it better to be famous for something like this than a more traditional career like acting?

Think of some professions that tend to be glorified nowadays.

Language focus: gendered nouns

Many languages use gendered language to describe people and ideas. However the English language has seen a change from gender specific nouns to neutral nouns. Do you know the gender-neutral words for these nouns?



mankind	air hostess	fisherman
actress	chairman	manpower
policeman	waitress	bachelor

Space urban myths: separate fact from fiction! What is hard to believe? Why? Check the answers on the next slide.

	TRUE	FALSE
1. The US spent millions developing a pen that would work in space while the Soviets just used a pencil.	☐	☐
2. The Great Wall of China is visible from space.	☐	☐
3. Outer space has a smell.	☐	☐
4. The US has a Don't Talk To Aliens law, just in case.	☐	☐
5. The sun is yellow and has rays like a child's drawing.	☐	☐
6. One side of the moon is permanently dark.	☐	☐

How many did you get right?

Check your answers to the previous question here.

1. This is a myth. NASA used mechanical pencils, although a private investor did try to invent an anti-gravity pen.
2. False. The Great Wall, although a feat of human engineering, is actually quite difficult to make out from space because it is so narrow.
3. True. Astronauts cannot smell space when they are outside the ship, but they say a smell similar to seared steak clings to their suit, tools and gloves when they come back into the airlock.
4. True. The US does have a law regarding contact with aliens, but it involves quarantining anyone who may have had contact with aliens to avoid health and safety risk. It is not illegal to make contact with aliens in the US.
5. False. The sun is actually white and looks more like a golf ball. It looks yellow to us because of the way its rays shine through the air.
6. False. It's true that one side of the moon permanently faces Earth, but the other side faces the sun at regular intervals and has days and nights just like Earth does.

Message home

Imagine you are an astronaut on a mission in space. You haven't seen your friends or family for over a year! You have the opportunity to send them a short voice recording. What do you say?



Exercise p. 10

1. leap, 2. tense, 3. involve, 4. astronaut, 5. trump, 6. orbit.

Exercise p. 11

A leap, to tense / tension, involvement / involved, a trump / trumped, an orbit / orbital or orbiting

Exercise p. 21

Humankind, flight attendant, fisher or fisherperson, actor, chair or chairperson, workforce, police officer, server, single person

Presentation

You have just landed on the moon! Describe what you see.
Prepare a two-minute presentation. Include several reasons to support your point of view.
Give your presentation to the class. Answer questions and get feedback.

Here I am! ...