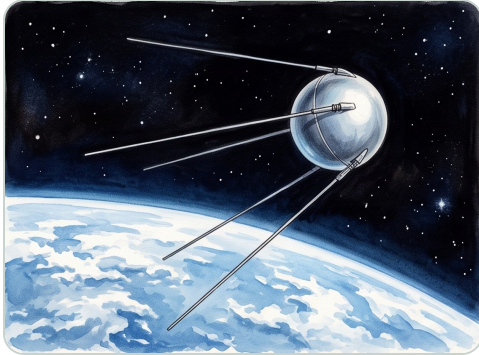


Space Race Timeline for Kids

1957 to 1975

In the 1950s, two countries both wanted to be first in space. They were the United States and the Soviet Union. Their contest is called the Space Race. This timeline shows how people first left the Earth and walked on the Moon.

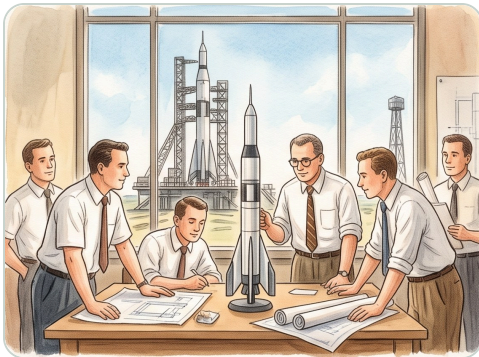


1957

Sputnik

The Soviet Union sends the first satellite into space. It is called Sputnik. It is a metal ball about the size of a beach ball, and it circles the Earth.

Why it matters: People were amazed. The Space Race had begun.



1958

NASA Begins

The United States starts a new space agency called NASA. Its job is to send rockets and people into space.

Why it matters: NASA has run America's space trips ever since.

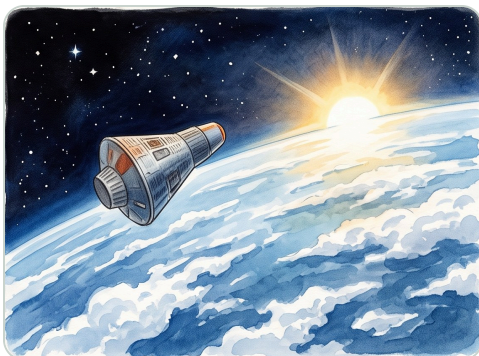


1961

The First Person in Space

Yuri Gagarin of the Soviet Union becomes the first person in space. He circles the Earth once in a small round spaceship. The trip takes 108 minutes.

Why it matters: It showed that people could travel in space and come home safely.



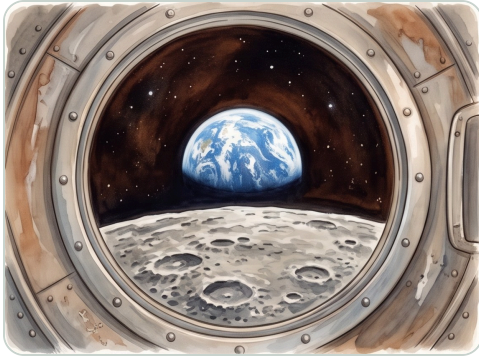
1962

An American in Orbit

John Glenn becomes the first American to circle the Earth. He goes around three times in about five hours.

Why it matters: The United States was catching up in the Space Race.

Space Race Timeline for Kids (page 2)

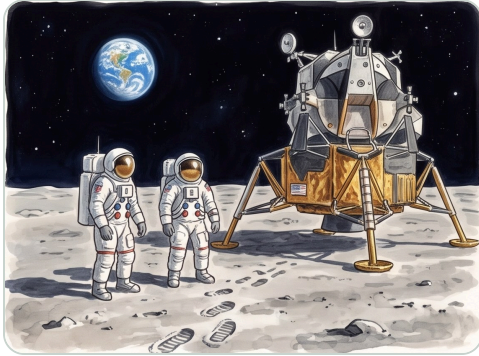


1968

Around the Moon

Three American astronauts fly all the way to the Moon in Apollo 8. They circle it ten times and come home.

Why it matters: They were the first people to see the far side of the Moon, and to see the whole Earth from far away.

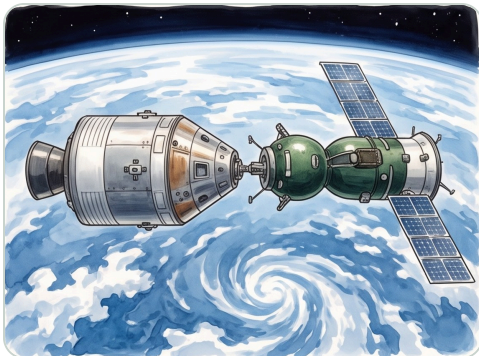


1969

Walking on the Moon

Apollo 11 lands on the Moon. Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin walk on its dusty ground. People all over the world watch on TV.

Why it matters: People had walked on another world for the first time.



1975

A Handshake in Space

An American spaceship and a Soviet spaceship join together above the Earth. The two crews shake hands and share a meal.

Why it matters: The race was over. The two countries began to work together in space.

Words to know

satellite: an object that circles the Earth in space

astronaut: a person who travels in space

orbit: to travel around a planet or moon

rocket: a machine that blasts off into space