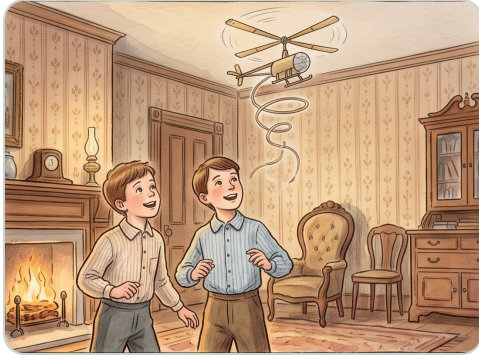


The Wright Brothers Timeline for Kids

1878 to 1908

For thousands of years, people dreamed of flying like birds. Two brothers from Ohio, Wilbur and Orville Wright, made that dream come true. This timeline shows how they built the first airplane.



1878

A Toy That Flies

Their father brings home a toy that flies. It is made of paper, cork and a rubber band. Wilbur is 11 and Orville is 7. They play with it until it breaks, then build their own.

Why it matters: The toy made the brothers curious about flying.

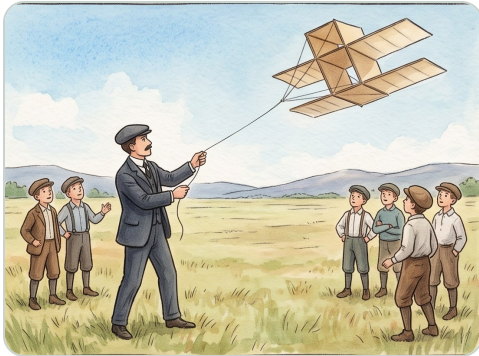


1892

The Bicycle Shop

Wilbur and Orville open a bicycle shop in Dayton, Ohio. They fix bikes and build new ones.

Why it matters: They learned to build light, strong machines. The shop also paid for their flying tests.

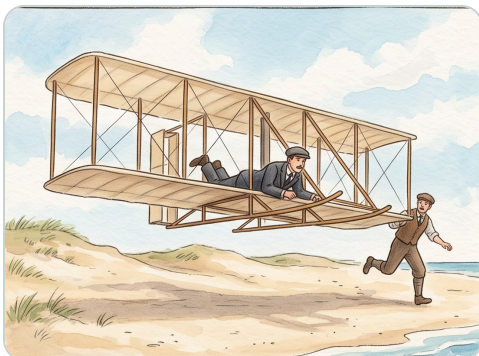


1899

A Kite with a Twist

The brothers build a big kite with two wings. They find they can steer it by twisting the tips of the wings.

Why it matters: They had found a way to control a flying machine.



1900

Gliders at Kitty Hawk

The brothers take a glider to Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. It has strong winds and soft sand. They fly the glider like a kite, and then ride on it.

Why it matters: Each test taught them something new.

The Wright Brothers Timeline for Kids (page 2)



1901

A Wind Tunnel

The gliders do not fly as well as the brothers hoped. They build a wind tunnel, a box with a fan. They test about 200 small wing shapes in it.

Why it matters: They learned which wing shape lifts best.



1903

The First Flight

On December 17, Orville flies their airplane with an engine. The flight lasts 12 seconds and covers 120 feet. They fly three more times that day. The longest flight lasts 59 seconds.

Why it matters: It was the first time a person flew an airplane with an engine.



1908

The World Watches

The brothers show their airplane to big crowds in France and in the United States. People are amazed. Some flights last more than an hour.

Why it matters: Soon people all over the world were building airplanes.

Words to know

glider: an aircraft with no engine that rides on the wind

engine: a machine that makes power to move something

wind tunnel: a box where moving air is used to test shapes

control: to make something go where you want