

The Moon Landing

In *Transformers 3*, Buzz Aldrin and Neil Armstrong find a crashed spaceship on the Moon. But what really happened when the first men walked on the Moon in 1969?

The Space race

Man has always wanted to explore space. For two countries getting to the Moon became a competition. Between 1959 and 1975, the USA and Russia tried to be the first.

Here are some important 'Firsts in Space' that the two countries achieved.

First animal in Space – Dog, Laika, USSR	1957
First photos of the Moon , including the dark side – USSR	1959
First man in Space – Yuri Gagarin, USSR	1961
First men to orbit the moon – USA	1968
First men on the moon – USA	1969
First Space Station – USSR	1971

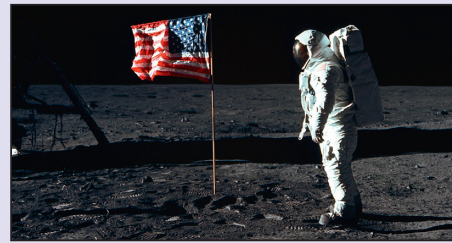
Apollo 11

The big prize in the Space race was to be first to put men on the moon. In 1961, the American President, John F Kennedy, promised to do this before the end of the 1960s. And the Americans were successful.

On July 16th 1969, Apollo 11 was launched from the Kennedy Space Centre with three men on it – Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins.



When they reached the moon, the spaceship went into lunar orbit and then a smaller module separated from the main ship and took Armstrong and Aldrin to the moon. Collins piloted the main spaceship around the moon alone until the other two men rejoined him for the trip back to Earth.



Around the world, about 600 million people watched the landing 'live' on television.

Armstrong and Aldrin spent about two and a half hours on the moon and picked up a lot of stones to bring back for the scientists. They also put up an American flag and took lots of photographs of the Moon and the spaceship.

They returned to Earth safely and were picked up from the Pacific Ocean on July 24th.

Did you know?

- The astronauts left messages from 73 world leaders.
- Aldrin broke an important wire in the module but luckily Armstrong repaired it by using a pen.
- There was only one minute of fuel left in the spaceship after the landing.
- The American flag on the Moon was blown over by the wind from the module as they left.
- The President, Richard Nixon, had a speech ready in case there was an accident and the astronauts didn't get back to Earth.

What do you think?

Do you think countries should continue to explore Space?

What do these words mean?

You can use a dictionary.

flag giant fuel logo olive branch
peace module

Famous Words

When Armstrong and Aldrin landed on the Moon in their small space module, Armstrong reported to the USA that 'The Eagle has landed'. 'Eagle' was the name of the module.

When Armstrong stepped onto the Moon he said: 'One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.'

The logo

Michael Collins designed the famous Apollo 11 logo. The eagle is the national bird of the USA and the olive branch at its feet was to show peace.

