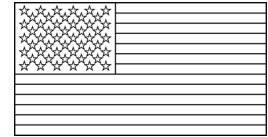


NAME _____

Florida and the Space Race

The Space Race was a competition between the Soviet Union and the United States. Both countries were challenged to put satellites and humans into space. When the Soviet Union launched *Sputnik I*, the first man-made satellite, into space in 1957, Americans were worried that they were losing the race to develop space technology. Pressure exploded from the American public demanding that the country catch up and increase investment in rocket technology.



United States flag

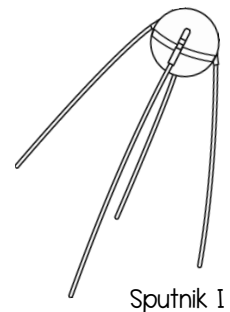


Soviet Union flag

Florida played an important role in the Space Race.

Launch Site Selection

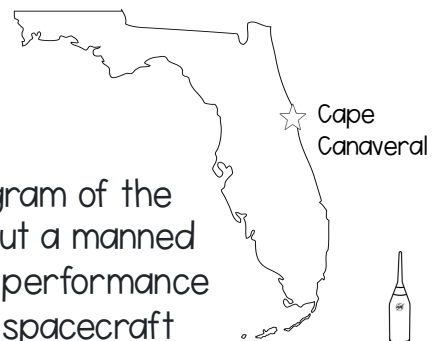
Florida's strategic location near the equator made it an ideal spot for space launches. Cape Canaveral was a perfect location because it was a scarcely populated flat land strip facing the ocean. Railroads and ships could easily access Cape Canaveral to bring in the materials required to build the launch pad and space station.



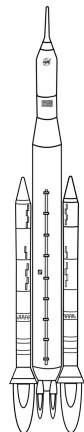
Sputnik I

NASA's Mercury Program

Project Mercury was the first human spaceflight program of the United States. The program had three objectives: to put a manned spacecraft in orbit around the Earth, to study human performance in space, and to ensure the safe retrieval of both the spacecraft and its crew. Cape Canaveral was the main launch site for NASA's Mercury program, the first manned spaceflight program in the United States. On May 5, 1961, the program launched its first American astronaut, Alan Shepard, into space aboard the Mercury-Redstone 3 mission, also known as Freedom 7.

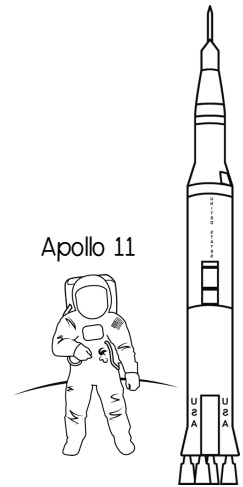


Cape Canaveral



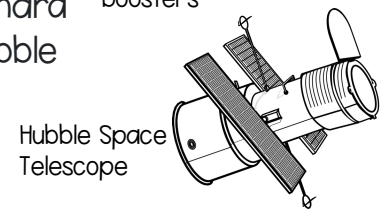
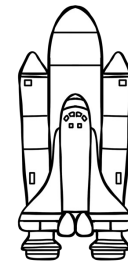
NASA's Apollo Program

Cape Canaveral was crucial to NASA's Apollo program, which aimed to land humans on the Moon and return them safely to Earth. The Apollo 8 was the first human spaceflight that traveled to the moon but did not land on it. Similarly, the crew of Apollo 10 also orbited the moon but did not land. The famous Apollo 11 mission, which successfully achieved this goal with astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin taking the first steps on the moon, launched from Cape Canaveral on July 16, 1969.



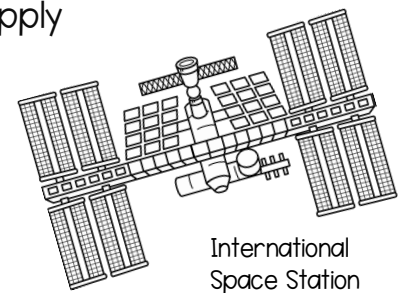
Space Shuttle Program

Florida was chosen as the main launch site for NASA's Space Shuttle program. The Kennedy Space Center (named after President John F. Kennedy), located in Cape Canaveral, was responsible for launching and landing the space shuttles. More than a hundred space shuttle flights have sent astronauts into orbit to study space and map the earth, construct and supply the International Space Station, successfully deploy the Chandra X-Ray Observatory, and perform ongoing repairs to the Hubble Space Telescope.



International Space Station (ISS):

Florida has played a significant role in the advancement of space exploration. It has contributed to the construction and resupply missions to the International Space Station (ISS). The space shuttles launched from Cape Canaveral carried essential components and astronauts to the ISS, which has helped establish a continuous human presence in space.



The Space Age Changes the Economy and Culture of Florida

NASA

The Space Age had a significant impact on Florida. The space program brought high-tech industries to Florida. Thousands of new workers moved to Cape Canaveral to work in aeronautics, electronics design, and manufacturing. In addition, factories sprouted all over the state, producing products for space programs.

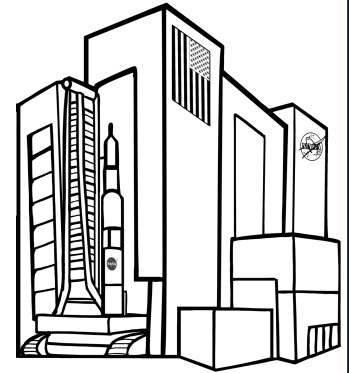
Surrounding cities, such as Titusville, Cocoa, Melbourne, and Orlando, also experienced a rapid increase in population. New buildings in every category, such as hospitals. With the growing population came new grocery stores, schools, libraries, hospitals, churches, theaters, and shopping centers. The space exploration industry and its related businesses injected billions of dollars of federal funding into Florida's economy.

In Florida, space has become an important part of the state's culture. Communities located near Cape Canaveral have been promoting Florida's "Space Coast" as a new and exciting tourist destination. To attract visitors and potential new residents, motels, restaurants, and even housing developments have adopted space-related themes. Additionally, developers have been emphasizing Florida's role in the space industry to attract new people and businesses to their communities.

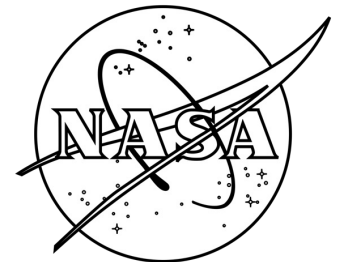
Space X

SpaceX, which stands for Space Exploration Technologies Corp., is an American company that specializes in manufacturing aerospace and space transport services. It was founded by Elon Musk in 2002 and is recognized as one of the world's leading private aerospace companies.

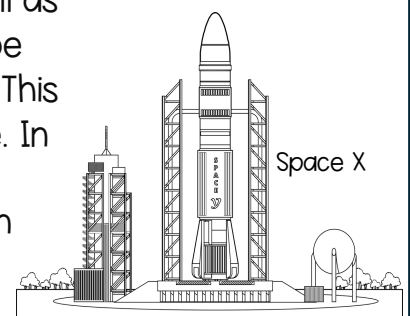
SpaceX aims to create space vehicles that can be reused. To this end, they have developed multiple launch vehicles, such as Falcon 1, Falcon 9, and Falcon Heavy, as well as a spacecraft named Dragon. These vehicles can land and be restored for future flights, making them partially reusable. This approach significantly reduces the cost of access to space. In October 2023, Elon Musk said, "We are trying to build something that is capable of creating a permanent base on the moon and a city on Mars."



Kennedy Space Center



Elon Musk



Space X