

Reading Comprehension Worksheet: Explain Connections in Information

Read the short story and answer each question.



The Race to the Moon

In the 1950s and 60s, two powerful countries—the United States and the Soviet Union—were competing in a new kind of race. It wasn't a race on land or sea. It was a race into **space**. Each country wanted to prove it had the strongest science, technology, and power. This time in history is known as the **Space Race**.

In 1957, the Soviet Union launched **Sputnik**, the first satellite to orbit Earth. This shocked the world and pushed the United States to act quickly. Just a few years later, the U.S. created **NASA**, a space agency designed to catch up—and eventually pull ahead.

The two countries continued trading victories. The Soviets sent the first man into space, but the U.S. sent the first astronauts to walk on the Moon. In 1969, millions of people watched as **Neil Armstrong** stepped onto the Moon and said, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

The Space Race wasn't just about reaching space—it was about pride, science, and national strength. The rivalry pushed both countries to invent new technology, train astronauts, and learn more about Earth and the Moon.

Although it was a competition, the Space Race helped humanity make progress in science and exploration.



Name: _____

The Race to the Moon

1. What was the relationship between the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the Space Race?

- A. They were rivals competing to achieve space exploration first.
- B. They teamed up to build a rocket together.
- C. They ignored each other's achievements in space.
- D. They focused only on exploring the ocean.

2. How did one country's actions affect the other during the Space Race?

- A. When one country succeeded, it motivated the other to work harder and achieve more.
- B. The countries agreed to stop space exploration.
- C. They refused to launch any satellites.
- D. They built rockets but never used them.

3. Fill in the blank:

The Soviet Union launched the first satellite, called _____, in 1957.

4. How did the competition between the U.S. and Soviet Union lead to advances in space science?

5. What connections do you see between the events described in the passage?



Parent and Teacher Guide

Guide Reading Level: T

Lexile Level: 900L-1050L

Grade Level: 5th Grade, Beginning of the Year

Genre: Informational – History / Space Science

Introducing the Text

“This passage describes the Space Race—a historical competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. Students will analyze how the actions of one country affected the other and how events built upon each other to shape the history of space exploration.”

Vocabulary: Space Race, satellite, orbit, NASA, astronaut

Before Reading Discussion Questions

1. What do you know about space exploration or space travel?
 2. Why might countries want to be the first to achieve something in science?
 3. What happens when one group tries to outdo another?
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During Reading Discussion Questions

1. How did each country's achievements affect the other's goals?
 2. What events pushed the U.S. to work faster in space science?
 3. Why was the Moon landing such a powerful moment in history?
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After Reading Discussion Questions

1. How are the actions of the U.S. and Soviet Union connected in the Space Race?
 2. What details from the passage show that competition can lead to progress?
 3. What might have happened if the Space Race never occurred?
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Activity Idea

Have students create a timeline of key events in the Space Race. Include each country's accomplishments and label which came first. Then write a paragraph explaining how the rivalry pushed both countries to advance in science.

