

# Teacher Guide



## Apollo: To the Moon

**F**or American schoolchildren growing up in the 1960s, the Apollo space program was a symbol of the ever-expanding world around them, a world that soon would include travel to the moon. Kevin Reese’s engaging theatre program follows the Apollo program through the eyes of scientist Scott Gibson. Reese stages young Scott’s dreams of becoming an astronomer, his education and research with NASA and his unstoppable desire to see the moon from space with his own eyes. “Apollo to the Moon” captures a very important moment in American history, detailing the excitement, the skepticism, the setbacks and the triumphs using lights, sound, projections and storytelling.

**Grades  
K-8**

**2** Before the Program

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Standards, and  
Further Exploration

# Before the Program

## LIST OF TERMS

The following terms in the program have important historical significance. Define these terms and remember how they figure in the plotline of "Apollo to the Moon":

Neil Armstrong  
the Cold War  
communications satellite  
Dwight David Eisenhower  
Guss Grissom  
John F. Kennedy  
the Mercury "Super Seven"  
NASA  
Sputnik  
Werner Von Braun  
James Webb  
Lyndon Baines Johnson

"I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth. No single space project will be more exciting, more impressive to mankind, or more important, and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish."



John F. Kennedy, 1961

## QUESTIONS

- Consult the timeline on the following page of this study guide. What other important events were happening in the world while the "space race" was underway? (John F. Kennedy was President, Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his "I Have a Dream" speech, the civil rights movement, the erection of the Berlin Wall, rock and roll's "British invasion," the Cuban missile crisis, Israel's Six Days War, etc.)



- Discuss the historical period described as the Cold War. How does the space race reflect this time in American/Russian relations? What is the relationship like now?

- Research and discuss what training, experience and education are needed to become an astronaut. What is the average age of a person who travels in space?
- The first woman in space was a Russian cosmonaut in the early 1960s. When did the first American woman go into space? The first African-American astronaut?



Sally Ride



Guion S. Bluford, Jr.

# THE MOON RACE: A TIMELINE



**1958**

President Eisenhower creates **NASA**, a government agency devoted to space exploration



**May 5, 1961**

**Alan Shepard** becomes the first American in space

**May 25, 1961**

In a speech before Congress, **President Kennedy** challenges NASA to put an American on the moon by the end of the decade.



**1965**

**January 27, 1967**

The **Apollo 1** spacecraft catches fire during a test run. All three of its crew members are killed.

**December 21, 1968**

The **Apollo 8** is the first mission to take humans to the moon and back.



**April 11, 1970**

During the third moon landing mission, an oxygen tank explodes on the **Apollo 13** spacecraft, forcing the crew to return home before visiting the moon.

**1970**



**October-November 1957**

The Russian space program launches **Sputnik I and II**, the first artificial satellites in space. Sputnik II also carries the first living being to orbit the earth, a dog named Laika.

**April 12, 1961**

Russian astronaut **Yuri Gagarin** becomes the first human in space.

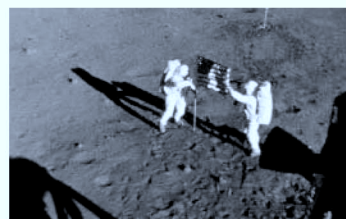
**June 16, 1963**

Russian astronaut **Valentina Tereshkova** becomes the first woman in space.



**June 3, 1965**

**Ed White** becomes the first American to walk in space



**July 20, 1969**

Americans **Neil Armstrong** and **Buzz Aldrin**, aboard the Apollo 11, become the first humans to walk on the moon.

**December 14, 1972**

American astronauts explore the moon in a **lunar roving vehicle**. This marks the last mission of the Apollo program, as well as the last time mankind has been to the moon.



# After the Program

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- In “Apollo to the Moon,” one actor plays all the characters. How did he change his voice, movement and costume to signify the different parts?
- What do you think the play’s sculpture-like set represents?
- Does any of the music used in the play sound familiar to you? What does it remind you of? Before you saw the play, did you associate it with that time period?

## ACTIVITY

Find a folktale or myth from another culture that either explains or gives interesting attributes to the Moon. How has the world viewed and understood the moon throughout human history?

# Meet the Artist

Actor/designer Kevin Reese and playwright/director Mary Hall Surface work nationally at professional theatres for audiences of all ages. Their productions were featured at the Kennedy Center, Seattle Children’s Theatre, Honolulu Theatre for Youth, the California Theatre Center and others. They have also brought their educational programs to Dublin, Ireland and Lyon France. “Apollo to the Moon” has been performing in Pittsburgh since 1999.

# Program Objectives

Students will become familiar with the history of space exploration in America, with special focus on the events that comprise the “space race” of the 1960s. Also, students will identify historical events, themes and cultural milestones through a theatrical presentation.

## Curriculum Connections & Standards for grades K-8

This program may be used to address Academic Standards in the following curriculum areas:

- Arts and Humanities
- History
- Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening
- Science and Technology

## Further Exploration

### BOOKS

Schulke, Flip and McPhee, Penelope and Raymond. *Your future in space: the U.S. Space Camp training program*. New York: Crown, 1986.

Muirden, James. *Going to the moon*. New York: Random House, 1987.

Simon, Seymour. *How to be a space scientist in your own home*. New York, Harper & Row, 1976.

### ON THE WEB

[www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov) – Home page of the NASA, with educational links.

[www.nasm.si.edu](http://www.nasm.si.edu) – Webpage of the Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum. Great graphics and links!

[www.thespaceraace.com](http://www.thespaceraace.com) – detailed listing of U.S./Russian space activity from 1958-1979.