

John Glenn

By Jane Runyon

¹ The Space Race was heating up. Both Russia and the United States had successfully launched satellites into orbit. A Russian cosmonaut went into orbit in April 1961. The President of the United States had given a goal to the American people. He motivated American space scientists to place a man on the moon by the end of the 1960s.

² John Glenn was willing to do his part to see that President Kennedy's goal was met. John was born in July of 1921. He grew up in Ohio. He didn't go to one of the military academies as Alan Shepard had. He studied to be an engineer at Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio. In 1942, he went through the Naval Aviation Cadet Program. When this was completed, he was **commissioned** as an officer in the Marine Corps. He loved flying fighter jets during World War II. He remained in the Pacific islands after World War II flying patrols. He decided to stay in the Marines. He became a flight instructor and traveled from Texas to Virginia to Korea. He decided to attend test pilot school and help develop newer and faster planes to be used for battle. At one time, he held the speed record for flying from one coast of the United States to the other. He made the flight in just three hours and twenty-three minutes.



³ In 1959, John Glenn became a member of a very elite group. He was selected to be a member of the Mercury astronauts. He was thrilled with the opportunity. After strenuous training, the Mercury astronauts were ready for space. Glenn was not chosen to pilot the first manned space flight. That honor went to Alan Shepard. John Glenn was chosen as a backup in case Shepard couldn't go.

⁴ The next manned flight went to astronaut Gus Grissom. Glenn was again a backup. Grissom made the second trip into space. This flight did not go into orbit, either. There was some excitement when Grissom landed in the Atlantic Ocean. The bolts holding the capsule latch exploded. The latch could not close. Grissom was able to get out of the capsule and get into an inflatable raft. The space capsule, however, sank to the bottom of the ocean.

⁵ John Glenn's chance to ride into space came on February 20, 1962. He was the first American to orbit the Earth in a manned spacecraft. He made three trips around the Earth. He landed somewhere near Grand Turk Island just a few minutes under five hours after the mission began.

⁶ John Glenn made a return trip to space in 1998. He was 77 years old and a member of the United States Senate at the time. His mission was to test the effects of space on the aging process.

⁷ John Glenn retired from the Senate in 1999. He has remained a strong supporter of the United States space program. America's first man in orbit will be remembered for his many accomplishments to his country.

John Glenn

<p>1. The United States was the first country to put a man into orbit around the Earth.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>	<p>2. Who was the first American to be launched into space?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Gus Grissom</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B John Glenn</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C John Kennedy</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D Alan Shepard</p>
<p>3. From which military academy did John Glenn graduate?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Naval</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Army</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C Marine</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D None of the above</p>	<p>4. What happened to Gus Grissom's space capsule?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>5. John Glenn was the first American to orbit the Earth in a space vehicle.</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A False</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B True</p>	<p>6. What was special about John Glenn's second trip into space?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>7. How many orbits around Earth did John Glenn make on his first trip?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A One</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Two</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C Four</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D Three</p>	<p>8. Who set the goal of having a man on the moon before 1970?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A Gus Grissom</p> <p><input type="radio"/> B Alan Shepard</p> <p><input type="radio"/> C John Glenn</p> <p><input type="radio"/> D John Kennedy</p>