

SPACE DISCOVERY

APOLLO 11

THE EAGLE HAS LANDED



The 3 astronauts of the Apollo 11 mission
Neil Armstrong - Michael Collins - Buzz Aldrin



July 1969. It's a little over eight years since the flights of Gagarin and Shepard, followed quickly by President Kennedy's challenge to put a man on the moon before the decade is out.

It is only seven months since NASA's made a bold decision to send Apollo 8 all the way to the moon on the first manned flight of the massive Saturn V rocket.

Now, on the morning of July 16, Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins sit atop another Saturn V at Launch Complex 39A at the Kennedy Space Center. The three-stage 363-foot rocket will use its 7.5 million pounds of thrust to propel them into space and into history.

At 9:32 a.m. EDT, the engines fire and Apollo 11 clears the tower. About 12 minutes later, the crew is in Earth orbit.

After one and a half orbits, Apollo 11 gets a "go" for what mission controllers call "Translunar Injection" - in other words, it's time to head for the moon. Three days later the crew is in lunar orbit. A day after that, Armstrong and Aldrin climb into the lunar module Eagle and begin the descent, while Collins orbits in the command module Columbia.

Collins later writes that Eagle is "the weirdest looking contraption I have ever seen in the sky," but it will prove its worth.

Places and Forms of Power

Space and Exchange

The idea of Progress

Myths and Heroes

When the lunar module lands at 4:18 p.m. EDT, only 30 seconds of fuel remain. Armstrong radios "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." Mission control erupts in celebration as the tension breaks, and a controller tells the crew "You got a bunch of guys about to turn blue, we're breathing again. »

Armstrong will later confirm that landing was his biggest concern, saying "the unknowns were rampant," and "there were just a thousand things to worry about. »

At 10:56 p.m. EDT Armstrong is ready to plant the first human foot on another world. With more than half a billion people watching on television, he climbs down the ladder and proclaims: "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind. »

Aldrin joins him shortly, and offers a simple but powerful description of the lunar surface: "magnificent desolation." They explore the surface for two and a half hours, collecting samples and taking photographs.

They leave behind an American flag, a patch honoring the fallen Apollo 1 crew, and a plaque on one of Eagle's legs. It reads, "Here men from the planet Earth first set foot upon the moon. July 1969 A.D. We came in peace for all mankind. »

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- 55 Armstrong and Aldrin blast off and dock with Collins in Columbia. Collins later says that "for the first time," he "really felt that we were going to carry this thing off. »

The crew splashes down off Hawaii on July 24. Kennedy's challenge has been met. Men from Earth have walked on the moon and returned safely home.

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In an interview years later, Armstrong praises the "hundreds of thousands" of people behind the project. "Every guy that's setting up the tests, cranking the torque wrench, and so on, is saying, man or woman, 'If anything goes wrong here, it's not going to be my fault.'"

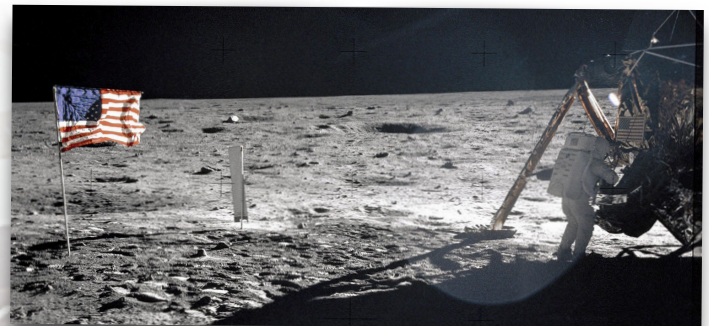
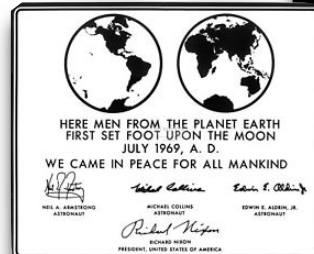
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In a post-flight press conference, Armstrong calls the flight "a beginning of a new age," while Collins talks about future journeys to Mars.

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Over the next three and a half years, 10 astronauts will follow in their footsteps. Gene Cernan, commander of the last Apollo mission leaves the lunar surface with these words: "We leave as we came and, god willing, as we shall return, with peace, and hope for all mankind."

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1. Introduce the document
2. What is Apollo 11? What was the mission?
3. Was it successful?
4. Who were the astronauts of Apollo 11?
5. When was the mission launched?
6. What rocket did they use?
7. What is the name of the Space Center? Why?
8. When did Apollo 11 arrive on the Moon?
9. What is the code for the successful landing? Why? Can you compare it to the badge of the mission?
10. Who is the first man to step on the Moon?
11. What did he say when he stepped on the surface of the Moon? Can you understand why he said that?
12. Who is the second man to walk on the Moon?
13. What did they leave on the Moon?
14. Armstrong said this was the «beginning of a new age» (l 68 / 69). Why? Do you agree?

