

First Moon Landing

NASA was set up in 1958 to organise US space exploration. It was an aspect of cold war rivalry Kennedy committed to US landing man on the moon by end of 1960's. Apollo programme was developed for this.

Apollo 11 had 3 parts

1. Command module Columbia to carry the astronauts
2. Service module to hold the rockets and fuel
3. Lunar module Eagle to land on the moon

3 astronauts were

1. Neil Armstrong commander
2. Eugene Buzz Aldrin pilot of the lunar module
3. Michael Collins pilot of the command module

Practised in simulators and experienced weightlessness in underwater tanks

Took off from Kennedy Space Centre Florida on 16 July 1969 millions watched on TV

On the journey each of the rocket stages was dropped off (jettisoned) once its fuel was used up took 3 days to reach the moon.

20th July Armstrong and Aldrin took the lunar module to the moon landing on the Sea of Tranquillity. Armstrong - "one small step for man one giant leap for mankind"

Walked on the moon for 20 hours setting up experiments and collecting samples planted an US flag and metal plaque

Eagle took off from the moon and docked with the command module. They returned to earth protected by a heat shield entering the earth's atmosphere splashed into the Pacific Ocean quarantined for 21 days

Significance

- ✓ 400,000 employed in the Apollo project
- ✓ US now led the space race against the USSR
- ✓ Fulfilled Kennedy commitment
- ✓ USSR concentrated on space station instead of the Moon race
- ✓ Budget cutbacks meant that no one has landed on the moon since 1972
- ✓ New information collected on the formation of the moon
- ✓ Debate on the cost of space exploration and whether the money should have been spent on economic and social problems