

A Giant Leap for Mankind

Learning objective: To understand the historical significance of the 1969 Moon landing and the achievements of Neil Armstrong.

Read the passage carefully about the first humans on the Moon and answer the questions that follow. Ensure you use full sentences where possible.

In 1969, the world watched in awe as the Apollo 11 mission reached the Moon. Neil Armstrong, an American astronaut, was chosen to be the commander of this historic flight. Along with his crewmates, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins, Armstrong travelled across the vast darkness of space to reach our nearest neighbour in the night sky. On 20 July 1969, the lunar module touched down safely. As Neil Armstrong stepped onto the dusty grey surface, he spoke the famous words: 'That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.' This was a monumental achievement for science and exploration. The crew collected rock samples and took photographs of the desolate, crater-filled landscape. Because the Moon has much less gravity than Earth, the astronauts had to move in a bouncing, hopping motion. When they returned to Earth, they were celebrated as heroes who had pushed the boundaries of what humans could achieve. Ellie the elephant, who loves history, says that this event changed how we view our place in the universe forever.

Word bank: Astronaut · Mission · Spacecraft · Apollo 11 · Gravity · Surface · Significant · Exploration

1. What was the name of the mission that landed the first humans on the Moon? (1 mark)

2. According to the text, why did the astronauts move in a bouncing, hopping motion? (2 marks)

3. Why might Neil Armstrong have described his first step as a 'giant leap for mankind' even though it was only a small physical step? (2 marks)

4. How do you think the people watching on Earth felt while they were waiting for the landing to happen? (2 marks)

5. Do you think the Moon landing was the most important event in history? Give a reason for your answer. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a picture of Neil Armstrong standing on the surface of the Moon. Include the Earth visible in the dark sky above him and add craters to the ground.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are an astronaut preparing for a trip to Mars. Write a short list of three items you would pack in your space suit pocket and explain why you chose them.