



Fly Me To The Moon

The time had come. It was the day of the launch. The date was 16th July 1969. The time was 9.32am. There were three astronauts in the spacecraft at the top of 363-foot-tall rocket called Saturn V. The spacecraft and mission were both called Apollo 11.

The astronauts were called Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins. Neil Armstrong was the Commander. That means he was in charge of the mission. They had been training for a long time. They felt scared. They felt nervous. They felt incredibly excited. They were about to go somewhere far, far away where nobody had ever been. They were going to the Moon.

They could hear voices in their ears. The scientists at the Kennedy Space Center were talking. The scientists were telling the astronauts what to do.

The astronauts were strapped in tight. It was going to be a bumpy ride. They held their breath. Then the countdown started.

10 seconds, 9 seconds, 8 seconds... The engines were getting louder. 7 seconds, 6 seconds, 5 seconds. The engines were roaring. The whole rocket was shaking. Buzz clenched his fists. Neil closed his eyes for a moment. Michael looked at the dials and checked the settings. The sound was deafening now.

VOCABULARY FOCUS

1. What word in the text describes 'someone in charge of a mission?'
2. Which two words **do not** describe the feelings of the astronauts
nervous bumpy scared
training excited
3. Which word in the text means sweep over or surround?
4. What word is used to describe the view of the Earth?

4 seconds. It felt like an earthquake. The astronauts were sweating. They were ready for this but it was still scary. 3 seconds. Neil could feel his muscles tightening. His jaw was aching. His ears hurt. It felt forever. 2 seconds. The rocket seemed like it was going to break in half. Everything was shaking so much. 1 second. Zero.

This was it.

“Here we go!!” shouted Buzz, but nobody heard him.

“Lift off, we have lift off!” came the voice from the control centre. The rocket slowly moved upwards, building speed. Flames engulfed the launch pad as the massive engines fired. The engines roared and thrust the spacecraft higher and higher. Then, twelve minutes later, they were in space. Everything slowed down. They could see the Earth. It was beautiful. They were flying to the Moon.

VIPERS QUESTIONS

R

What time did the spacecraft launch?

R

What was the name of the place it launched from?

I

Why could nobody hear Buzz when he shouted?

E

Why do you think the astronauts felt scared?

Answers:

1. Commander
2. Bumpy / Training
3. Engulfed
4. Beautiful

R: 9.32am

R: Kennedy Space Center

I: Because the rocket was so loud

I: Any appropriate answer (going somewhere no one had been / the sound of the engines / the danger of the mission / the pressure / the nerves etc)