

## READING A CHRONOLOGY

# SPACE-RACE RIVAL

For many years, the United States and the Soviet Union (now Russia) strove to outdo one another in space. This competition is often described as the “space race.” Although the U.S. was the first—and

only—country to land humans on the moon, the Soviet Union achieved many more “firsts” in space.

Read this chronology of Soviet space accomplishments. Then answer the questions that follow.

### TIME LINE

**1957:** The Soviet Union launches *Sputnik*, the world’s first satellite. A month later, it launches the first living being into space—a dog named Laika. She orbits Earth aboard *Sputnik 2*.

**1959:** The Soviet Union launches *Luna 2*, the first probe to hit the moon’s surface. Weeks later, *Luna 3* is launched. It circles the moon and radios back the first pictures of its far side.

**1961:** Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin becomes the first human to travel in space. He orbits Earth aboard *Vostok 1*.

**1963:** Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova becomes the first woman in space. She orbits Earth 45 times in *Vostok 6*.

**1965:** Soviet Alexei Leonov takes the first-ever “walk” in space. He floats in space for 12 minutes and 9 seconds, connected to his craft by a 10-foot-long tether.

**1971:** The Soviet Union launches *Salyut 1*, the first space station. Three cosmonauts spend 23 days on the station but die when their capsule leaks air when re-entering Earth’s atmosphere, depriving them of oxygen.

**1971:** The Soviets launch the first probe to orbit another planet—Mars—and the first probe to reach the surface of Mars.

**1975:** A Soviet spacecraft docks with a U.S. spacecraft in the first joint U.S.-Soviet space mission. Cosmonauts and astronauts conduct experiments together for two days.

**1986:** The Soviet Union launches *Mir 1*, the first space station permanently occupied by humans. It remains in orbit until 2001.

**1988:** Soviet cosmonauts Vladimir Titov and Musa Manarov return to Earth as the first crew to exceed one year in space. They lived and worked on *Mir 1* for 365 days, 22 hours, and 39 minutes.

**1992:** Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russia forms its own space agency.

### QUESTIONS

- True or false? Cosmonaut Alexei Leonov walked on the moon. \_\_\_\_\_
- Why didn’t the first cosmonauts to spend time on a space station survive? \_\_\_\_\_
- What did Vladimir Titov and Musa Manarov accomplish? \_\_\_\_\_
- Who was the first person in space? \_\_\_\_\_
- What did the *Luna 3* probe accomplish? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many years passed between the launching of the *Salyut 1* and *Mir 1* space stations? \_\_\_\_\_
- How long ago did the Soviets send the first animal into space? \_\_\_\_\_
- What made *Mir 1* different from the *Salyut 1* space station? \_\_\_\_\_
- In your opinion, which space “first” achieved by the Soviet Union was the most important? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_
- The Soviets had many important achievements in space. How do you think these achievements affected the U.S. space program? Explain. \_\_\_\_\_