

The Right Stuff



How the future began

"Opening: the demon."

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1. What is/was the demon?
2. What is Mach 1?
3. What is the sound barrier?

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"Sizing up the X-1."

1. Who was the first test pilot to successfully fly the X-1?
2. The air base that the test pilots flew from was very desolate. Why?

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"Beyond the sound barrier."

1. What was the loud boom produced by the X-1 on October 14, 1947?

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"The best pilot" arrives at Edwards."

1. Who believed he was "the best pilot you ever saw?"
2. What were the names of his two buddies who arrived at Edwards Air Force Base (AFB) with him? What branch of the military were they in?

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"Pudknockers reunion."

1. What is a pudknocker?
2. What did a pilot have to do to be memorialized on Pancho's wall?

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"Where the demon lives."

1. Who was the first man to reach Mach 2 and on what historic anniversary did he reach it?

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"Sputnik: spaceman candidates."

1. What was Sputnik and why was it important?

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2. Chuck Yeager wasn't chosen to be an astronaut. Why not?

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3. Why wasn't Scott Crossfield chosen?

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4. Exactly what kind of candidate was the government looking for?

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"A TV personality."

1. Why was John Glenn such an appealing candidate? What branch of the military was he in?

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"Count the aviator in."

1. Who was Jose Jimenez?

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2. What branch of the military was Allan Shepard in?

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"Put to the test."

1. As you can see, the astronaut candidates were subjected to a huge battery of medical tests. If noone had ever been into before then how did they know what tests to perform on them? What was the real purpose of those tests? (Hint: Check out Gordo and the other astronaut in that compartment.)

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2. List at least four different tests that you saw administered.

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"America's Mercury Astronauts."

1. Who were the Mercury 7 astronauts? Give their names.

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"Misfires."

1. What happened on July 29, 1960? How many times did the movie show this type of event happening?

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"The issues: zippers and monkeys."

1. This chapter deals with man vs. monkey. What are the advantages and disadvantages of both?

Man:

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Monkey:

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"Critiquing the spacecraft."

1. What were the spacecraft modifications the astronauts demanded? Do you think those modifications were really necessary?

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"The first in space."

1. Who was the first in space for the United States? (January 31, 1961)

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"Man aloft: Russian."

1. Who was the first earthman in space?
2. What was the reaction to this back in the United States?

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"First American in space."

1. Who was the first American in space? What was the name of his spacecraft?

2. Why was he chosen over the other 6?

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(Bonus question! The reason isn't given in the movie!)

3. How long did his flight last? Did he actually orbit the earth?

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4. On reentry, you hear him saying, "8...9..." as the spacecraft shudders. He was talking about 8 g's and then 9 g's. What is a "g"?

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"Grissom aloft: a malfunction."

1. What was the "malfunction" on Grissom's flight? What the name of his spacecraft?

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2. What did the review panel think of Grissom's story? Did they buy? Why or why not?

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3. The loss of his capsule was a loss for the space program. Why?

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4. What "extra" items did Grissom take up with him and why?

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President John F. Kennedy's speech

"William Bradford, speaking in 1630 of the founding of the Plymouth Bay colony, said that all great and honorable actions are accompanied with great difficulty and both must be enterprised and overcome with answerable courage. If this capsule history of our progress teaches us anything, it is that man and his quest for knowledge and progress is determined and cannot be deterred. The exploration of space will go ahead, whether we join in it or not, we need to be a part of it - we need to lead it.

For the eyes of the World now look into space, to the Moon and to the planets beyond. Our leadership in science and industry, our hopes for peace and security, our obligations to ourselves, as well as others, all require us to make this effort. To solve these mysteries. To solve them for the good of all men. There is no strife, no prejudice, no national conflict in outer space-as yet. Its hazards are hostile to us all. Its conquest deserves the best of all mankind.

WE CHOOSE TO GO TO THE MOON!

WE CHOOSE TO GO TO THE MOON!

We choose to go to the Moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy – but because they are hard! Because that challenge is one we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone and one we intend to win!"
Excerpted from the Rice University speech by John F. Kennedy on September 12, 1962.

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"Godspeed John Glenn."

1. Why was it necessary to send someone to Australia for Glenn's orbit?

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2. What was the name of Glenn's spacecraft and how many times was it cleared to orbit the earth?

3. What speed does Glenn report for his spacecraft during orbit?

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4. What problem did Glenn's spacecraft have? What solution was suggested to solve this problem?

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5. Because of this problem, how many orbits did he end up making instead?

6. Why was the capsule on fire during reentry?

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7. What is ionization blackout and how long does it last?

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"A Texas-style welcome."

1. Why was this celebration held in Texas?

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2. Aside from getting to go into space, what were the perks of being an astronaut?

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3. Who was the last of the Mercury 7 to go into space?

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" "A plane with my name on it." "

1. Why was Yeager wearing a spacesuit when he attempted to break the Russian altitude record (114,000 ft) for a plane?

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2. You see him walking away from the crash so you know he survived.
How did you know that he had survived before seeing this scene?

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"Gordo's heavenly light; End Credits."

1. Gordo Cooper was the last Mercury 7 astronaut and the last American
to go into space alone. How many orbits did he complete?

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2. Why was he the last to go into space alone?