The Space Race
1957-1975
• October 4, 1957: The Soviet Union launches Sputnik 1, the first artificial satellite to orbit the Earth.

• The “Sputnik Crisis” leads U.S. to create National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA) and increase school spending through the National Defense Education Act (NDEA).

• November 3, 1957: Sputnik 2 carries a dog named Laika into orbit. Laika dies five hours into flight.

• May 28, 1958: Able and Baker, female rhesus monkeys, become the first living beings to survive a flight into space.
• February 1, 1958: U.S. launches Explorer 1, first U.S. satellite

• September 12, 1959: Soviets launch Luna 2, first probe to reach surface of the moon.
• April 12, 1961: Yuri Gagarin becomes first man in space, going into orbit aboard Vostok 1

• August 19, 1960: Soviets launch dogs Belka (“Whitey”) and Strelka (“Arrow”), returning them successfully to Earth. In 1961 one of Strelka’s puppies is given to JFK’s daughter Caroline by Nikita Khrushchev.
• May 5, 1961: Alan Shepard becomes first American in space in sub-orbital 16-minute flight on Freedom 7

• February 20, 1962: John Glenn becomes first American to orbit Earth on Friendship 7

• 1962 U.S. launches Telstar, first active communications satellite

• June 16, 1963: Valentina Tereshkova becomes first woman in space aboard Vostok 6

• October 12, 1964: Voskhad 1 is first flight with multiple cosmonauts and first flight on which crew did not wear spacesuits.
- October 14, 1964: Nikita Khrushchev is ousted in favor of Leonid Brezhnev, who refuses to commit to continue the Soviet’s all-out lunar landing effort.

- March 18, 1965: Alexey Leonov aboard Voskhod 2 carries out first spacewalk.

- February 3, 1966: After eleven failed efforts the Soviet’s Luna 9 completes first lunar soft landing.
• January 27, 1967: Apollo 1 astronauts Gus Grissom, Ed White, and Roger Chafee die when their command module catches fire during the pre-launch test.

• December 1968: James Lovell, Frank Borman, and Bill Anders orbit the moon aboard Apollo 8 and take the first photo of the Earth from space.

• July 21, 1969: Apollo 11 astronaut Neil Armstrong becomes first human to walk on moon.
• On September 27, 2008, China's third manned space flight culminated in Zhia Zhigang’s 15-minute spacewalk.

• On October 15, 2003, China becomes the third nation to put a man into Earth orbit, astronaut Yang Liwei.
• video of the Martian sunrise taken by the Phoenix Mars explorer on September 5, 2008.