

Reading Lesson

A2 Look to the Skies

Reading

Read the text about Valentina Tereshkova. Is it unusual for a woman to go into space?

Look to the Skies

Valentina Tereshkova was born in the Russian village of Bolshoye Maslennikovo in 1937. Her father died when she was very young. She and her brother and sister were raised by their mother, who earned money by working in a textile mill. When she was 17, Valentina started to work in the same textile mill.

In the early 1960s, the US and the Soviet Union were in a "Space Race." The Soviet Union sent the first man into space, Yuri Gagarin, in 1961, and the Americans sent Alan Shepard into space soon after. The Soviet Union decided to try to be the first to send a woman into space. Valentina Tereshkova's hobby at the time was parachuting. Because of this, they chose her for the cosmonaut training program in 1962.

Most astronauts and cosmonauts (as the Russians called them) were pilots, but Valentina had no flight training. They chose four women to train as cosmonauts, but Valentina was the only one to go into space. On June 16, 1963, *Vostok 6* left the Earth with Valentina on board. She spent almost three days in space and made 48 orbits around Earth. That was more than all the American astronauts in total up to that time!

When *Vostok 6* returned to the atmosphere, Valentina parachuted down from 6,000 meters. The Soviet Union treated her like a hero. She married another cosmonaut and started a family. She graduated from the Zhukovsky Military Air Academy in 1969 and represented the Soviet Union at international events. A crater on the moon is called "Tereshkova" in her honor.

Tereshkova was interested in helping women, and she was the head of the Soviet Committee for Women for over 20 years. However, no other Russian women went into space until 1984, one year after the first American woman went.



Vocabulary

Match to complete the sentences.

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1. A kind of factory that grinds material is a/an _____. | a orbit |
| 2. A large piece of material to slow you down falling when you jump from a plane is a/an _____. | b mill |
| 3. A trip in space around Earth once is a/an _____. | c crater |
| 4. The air around the planet Earth is the _____. | d atmosphere |
| 5. One of the large holes we can see on the moon is a/an _____. | e parachute |

Reading Lesson

Comprehension

Choose the correct word or phrase.

1. Valentina's **mother** / **father** worked in a mill to support the family.
2. **Alan Shepard** / **Yuri Gagarin** was the first man in space.
3. Valentina joined the cosmonaut training program because she was good at **flying** / **parachuting**.
4. **Only Valentina** / **Valentina and other women** went into space in the 1960s and 1970s.
5. After going into space, Valentina lived a **quiet life at home** / **a public life in politics**.

Thinking

Why do you think Tereshkova became a very public figure after she came back from space?