

Vocabulary: space 词汇: 太空

There's no doubt that one of the greatest achievements by **humankind** is the **exploration** of space. Ever since **cosmonaut** Yuri Gagarin became the first person to journey into space in 1961, scientists have been exploring it and **pushing the boundaries** to try and go further and discover things that are yet to be discovered. But probably the only thing that's certain about this exploration into the unknown so far, is it's been dominated by men.

Of course, in the past, women haven't been excluded from space projects. Women have been involved on the ground at **mission control** – and behind the scenes women have worked as seamstresses, stitching vital **spaceflight components**. In fact, many of **NASA's** key **missions** would never have left the ground without them. And it was a group of black female **mathematicians**, recently depicted in a Hollywood movie called Hidden Figures, who helped NASA launch an American into space.

But this hasn't been women's only contribution. Back in 1963, Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova became the first woman to **blast off** into space. However, after that, space flight programmes were slow to employ women. In the USA, NASA didn't accept applications from women to become **astronauts** until 1978 and as missions to the Moon had ended by then, it meant Neil Armstrong's arrival on **the Moon** in 1969 was 'a giant step for mankind' – and also an important step for a man.

But attitudes have moved on and leading engineers at NASA have said that the first person to **set foot** on **Mars** should be a woman. The space agency aims to have a **gender-balanced** workforce but can only achieve that if equal numbers of men and women train for science and technology careers. As Allison McIntyre, Chief of the **NASA Space Vehicle Mock-up Facility**, told the BBC: "My director is a woman, my former division chief is a woman. We have female astronauts. We haven't put a woman on the Moon yet. And I think that perhaps the first person to step on Mars should be a woman."

A woman landing on Mars would be an incredible achievement for being a first for womankind and would, for some, be **out of this world!** It would certainly inspire a younger female generation by showing what is possible. For them, the thought of other **planets** being a men-only destination, would be **an alien concept**.

词汇表

humankind	人类
exploration	探索
cosmonaut	(前苏联的) 宇航员
push the boundaries	挑战极限, 突破极限
mission control	航天地面指挥中心
spaceflight components	航天组件
NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration)	美国国家航空航天局
mission	(航天) 任务
mathematician	数学家
blast off	(太空飞船等) 发射
astronaut	宇航员
the Moon	月球
set foot	踏上(某地)
Mars	火星
gender-balanced	性别平衡的
NASA Space Vehicle Mock-up Facility	美国航天局飞行器模拟中心
out of this world	极好的
an alien concept	一个陌生的概念

测验与练习

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. What does 'stitching vital spaceflight components' mean in the article?
2. What did Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova do in 1963?
3. True or false: *Female astronauts were not allowed on the Moon until 1978.*
4. How can NASA achieve a 'gender-balanced workforce'?
5. Who was the first man to set foot on Mars?

2. 请在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. The explorer was the first person _____ on the undiscovered Pacific island.

to set feet	to set foot	to set feets	to foot set
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2. My trip to the Himalayas was _____. The scenery was awesome!

pushing the boundaries	an alien concept	out of this world	gender-balanced
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3. I can't believe how many _____ there are in a smartphone.

components	missions	cosmonauts
component		

4. We need a _____ audience to complete our market research questionnaire.

balance-gender	gendered-balance	gender-balanced	gender-balance
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5. Stephen Hawking once said the he feared the development of full artificial intelligence, could spell the end of _____.

astronauts

humankind

missions

womankind

答案

1. 阅读课文并回答问题。

1. What does 'stitching vital spaceflight components' mean in the article?
It means sewing together important pieces of materials to be used on missions into space.
2. What did Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova do in 1963?
She became the first woman to travel into space.
3. True or false: *Female astronauts were not allowed on the Moon until 1978.*
False. NASA didn't accept applications from women to become astronauts until 1978 and missions to the Moon had ended by then.
4. How can NASA achieve a 'gender-balanced workforce'?
It says it can only be achieved by getting equal numbers of men and women to train for science and technology careers.
5. Who was the first man to set foot on Mars?
Nobody – man or woman – has landed on Mars yet!

2. 请在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. The explorer was the first person **to set foot** on the undiscovered Pacific island.
2. My trip to the Himalayas was **out of this world**. The scenery was awesome!
3. I can't believe how many **components** here are in a smartphone.
4. We need a **gender-balanced** audience to complete our market research questionnaire.
5. Stephen Hawking once said the he feared the development of full artificial intelligence, could spell the end of **humankind**.