

VIP

VERY IMPORTANT PEOPLE

DR. MAE JEMISON



HEATHER ALEXANDER

INTERIOR ILLUSTRATIONS BY
JEN BRICKING

HARPER

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VIP: Dr. Mae Jemison

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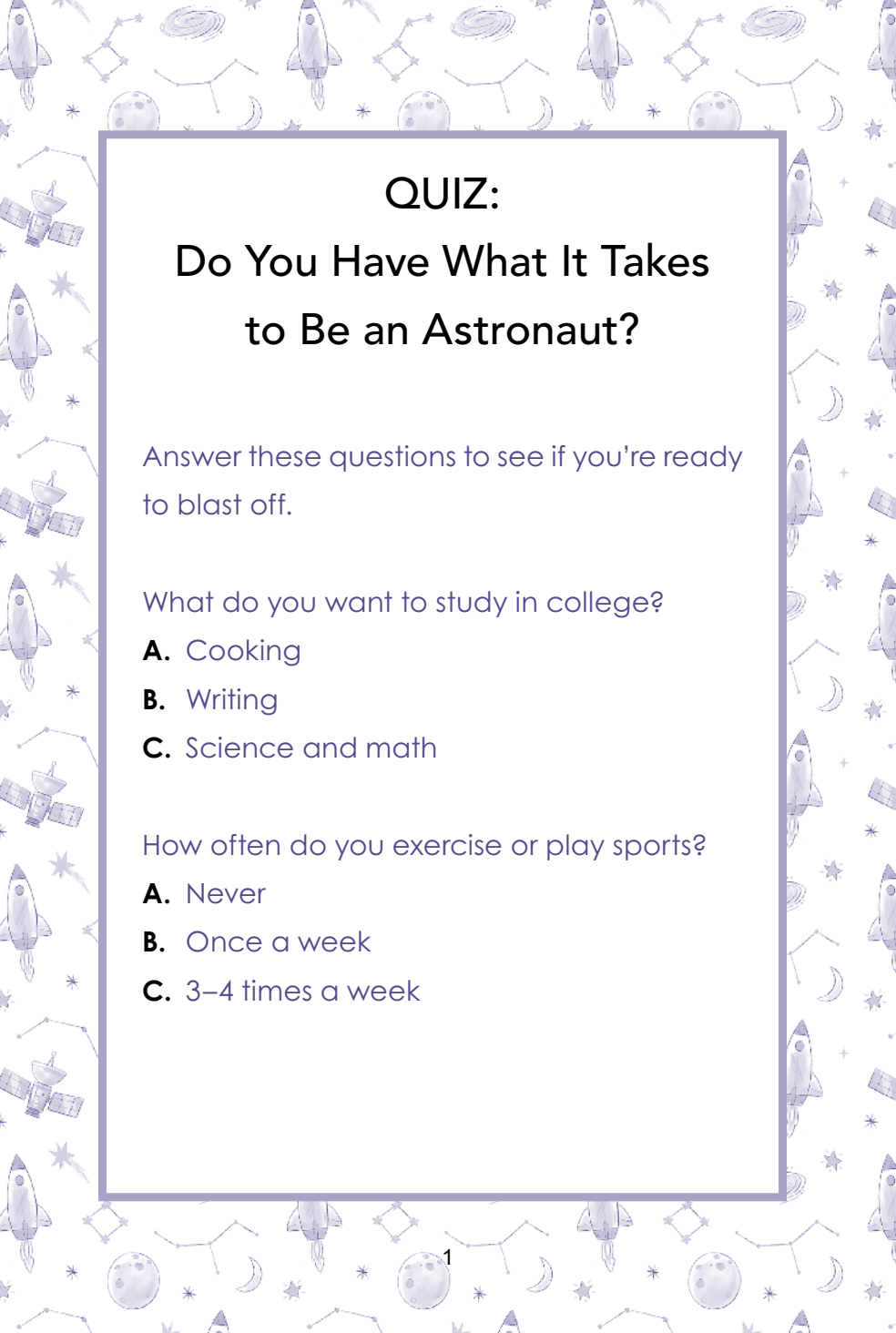
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First Edition



QUIZ:

Do You Have What It Takes to Be an Astronaut?

Answer these questions to see if you're ready
to blast off.

What do you want to study in college?

- A.** Cooking
- B.** Writing
- C.** Science and math

How often do you exercise or play sports?

- A.** Never
- B.** Once a week
- C.** 3–4 times a week

How do you feel about roller coasters?

- A.** Hate them.
- B.** Like them but sometimes get queasy.
- C.** Love them. The more steep drops the better!

You're riding your bike and it breaks down.
You:

- A.** Ditch it and walk home.
- B.** Call your parents and help them bring it to the repair shop.
- C.** Inspect the gears, pedals, and tires to see what went wrong and if you can fix it.

Could you be away from your friends and family for six months?

- A.** Never
- B.** Maybe
- C.** Sure

You need to do a group project in class. How well do you work with others?

- A.** Horribly. I prefer to go solo.
- B.** Okay. I can make it work.
- C.** Great. Teamwork is my middle name.

You have a test tomorrow, you have to babysit your cranky little brother, your computer breaks, and your dog starts to vomit (all at the same time) . . . how are you feeling?

- A.** Totally stressed out. You curl up and whimper.
- B.** Somewhat stressed. You yell at the dog, but you still hold it together.
- C.** Chill. You take deep breaths and stay zen.

How long can you hold your breath?

- A.** 10 seconds
- B.** 30 seconds
- C.** 60 seconds

In this pattern, what comes next? ○ ○○ ○○○

- A. ○
- B. ○○○
- C. ○○○○

How did you do? Add up how many times you chose C for your answer.

0–4: Astronaut training may not be your thing—but there are plenty of aerospace jobs that let you keep your feet on the ground and your eyes to the sky.

5–7: You're almost there . . . just need a bit more training.

8–9: Get out your space suit! You're ready for the next mission!

My Space Packing List

If you were traveling to space, what three special things would you bring?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Timeline: Dr. Mae Jemison

1956

Born on October 17 in Decatur, Alabama

1959

Moves to Chicago, Illinois

1973

Graduates from Morgan Park High School at age 16

1977

Graduates from Stanford University

1981

Graduates from Cornell University Medical College

1983

Volunteers as a medical officer with the Peace Corps in Sierra Leone and Liberia, West Africa

1985

Applies to be an astronaut at NASA

1987

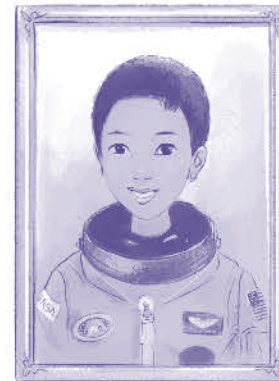
Is selected as an astronaut candidate

1992

Becomes the first female African American astronaut to go into space. Works as a mission specialist aboard the space shuttle *Endeavour*.

1993

Retires from NASA. Starts the Jemison Group.



Timeline: Women in Spaceflight

1958

United States government forms NASA

1962

Thirteen women pass NASA's physical tests, yet none are selected for the program

1963

Russian cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova becomes the first woman in space

1982

Russian cosmonaut Svetlana Savitskaya becomes the second woman in space

1983

Sally Ride becomes the first American woman in space

1984

Svetlana Savitskaya becomes the first woman to walk in space. Kathryn Sullivan is the first American to walk in space later this year

1992

Mae Jemison is the first African American woman in space

1993

Ellen Ochoa becomes the first Hispanic woman in space

1995

Eileen Collins becomes the first woman to pilot a space shuttle

1997

Kalpana Chawla becomes the first Indian American woman in space

1999

Eileen Collins becomes the first female commander of a space shuttle mission

2002

Peggy Whitson becomes the first female scientist to work at the International Space Station

2006

Anousheh Ansari becomes the first Muslim woman in space

2007

Sunita Williams becomes the first astronaut to run a marathon in space (on a treadmill)

2008

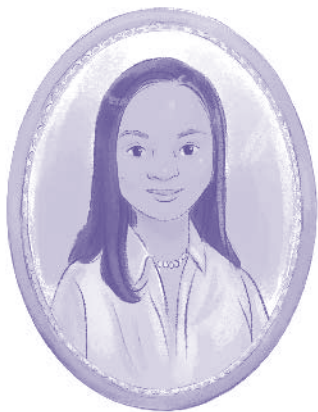
Peggy Whitson becomes the first woman to command the International Space Station

2017

Peggy Whitson completes the most total time in space (665 days cumulative) by any American astronaut, male or female

VIP Hall of Fame

Mae Jemison was a trailblazer for women in STEM. Here are a few other African American women who have led the way in science, technology, engineering, and math:

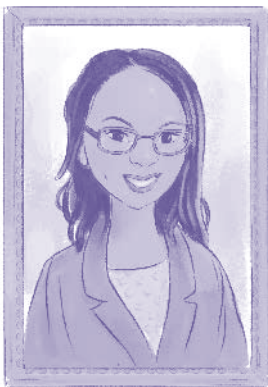


Ashanti Johnson was the first African American female chemical oceanographer. She analyzes how past big environmental events (like oil spills) have impacted our coasts and our lives.



Joycelyn Elders worked as a pediatrician and public health administrator before she became the first African American Surgeon General of the United States.

Aprille Ericsson is one of the most famous women at NASA today. She's worked on spacecrafts and instruments that help us understand space science and the Earth.



Lisette Titre-Montgomery used her knowledge of computer programming to become one of America's leading video game artists and designers. She's worked on games like "Tiger Woods Golf," "The Simpsons," and "South Park."

Bibliography

Alagna, Magdalena. *Mae Jemison*. New York: Rosen Publishing Group, 2004.

Calkhoven, Laurie. *You Should Meet Mae Jemison*. New York: Simon Spotlight, 2016.

Jemison, Mae. *Find Where the Wind Goes: Moments from My Life*. New York: Scholastic, 2001.

Yannuzzi, Della A. *Mae Jemison: A Space Biography*. New Jersey: Enslow Publishers, 1998.

Further Reading

Women in Space: 23 Stories of First Flights, Scientific Missions and Gravity-Breaking Adventures by Karen Bush Gibson

Reaching for the Moon by Buzz Aldrin, illustrated by Wendell Minor

Hidden Figures Young Readers' Edition by Margot Lee Shetterly

13 Planets: The Latest View of the Solar System by David A. Aguilar

Apollo 13 (Totally True Adventures): How Three Brave Astronauts Survived a Space Disaster by Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld, illustrated by Wesley Lowe

Exploring Constellations by Sara L. Latta

Exploring Space: From Galileo to the Mars Rover and Beyond by Martin Jenkins, illustrated by Stephen Biesty