



# THE SATURN V ROCKET



The Saturn V was a type of rocket – the largest, most powerful rocket ever built. It was, in fact, three rockets in one.

The Saturn V was a crucial part of the Apollo project – a mission to send humans into space, it was the rocket which launched the spacecraft that landed astronauts on the Moon. This mission was called Apollo 11.

## HOW BIG WAS THE SATURN V?

- The Saturn V rocket was 111 meters tall – about the height of a 36-story- building.
- The Saturn V weighed 2.8 million kilograms – about the weight of 400 elephants.
- The Saturn V could launch about 118,000 kilograms into Earth's orbit – about the same weight as ten buses.

## THE SPACE RACE

Between 1957 and 1969 the Soviet Union (now known as Russia) and the United States of America (USA) competed to see who could explore space most effectively and with the best technology. This was known as The Space Race. Both countries were determined to be the first to send humans into space and to land them on the Moon.

- The Soviet Union took the lead in The Space Race when they became the first country to send a person into outer space in 1961. The cosmonaut's name was Yuri Gagarin. A cosmonaut is somebody who has been trained and certified by the Russian Space Agency to work in space.
- The President of the USA, John F Kennedy, responded to this by beginning The Apollo Program. This project was led by NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration). The goal was to send a human to explore the Moon and bring him home to Earth safely.

"I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to earth."

– **President J. F. Kennedy (25<sup>th</sup> May 1961)**



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EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. How tall was the Saturn V rocket?
  2. What was The Space Race?
  3. Which American President began the Apollo Program?
  4. Who designed the Saturn V rocket?
  5. Why did the first stage of the Saturn V rocket need five engines?
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