

# Astronaut

**Cluster: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math**

**Content Area Integration: Art, Science, Social Studies, ELL**

## **Background Information:**

An astronaut is a person trained by a human spaceflight program to command, pilot, or serve as a crew member of a spacecraft. Although generally reserved for space travelers, the term is sometimes applied to anyone who travels into space, including scientists, politicians, journalists, and tourists.

## **Objective:**

Students will gain an understanding of the work of an astronaut and how an astronaut contributes to a community.

## **Hands-on Activity: What Does an Astronaut Do?**

Explain to the class that you are going to build a word wall about astronauts, and the word wall will be built after the students listen to three questions and answers about astronauts. Read the following questions and answers one at a time. As students discuss each question and answer, write significant words on the word wall. Add words that you feel may be needed to help students understand the depth and relevance of the work of an astronaut.

- **What is an astronaut?** An astronaut is a special kind of scientist that takes a space craft to outer space to study things like asteroids, the earth's atmosphere, and the moon. Astronauts wear a special suit to keep them alive in outer space.
- **What do astronauts do?** They go into outer space for studying a specific part of the universe. Astronauts operate spacecraft, organize operations, conduct equipment repairs, and work with scientists on research projects. Some orbit the earth, and some walk on the moon, but no astronaut has ever walked on another planet.
- **Why are astronauts important?** Their experiences help scientists discover unknown facts and generate knowledge about the universe. Discoveries made during space exploration have helped our country in many ways.

Conclude the discussion by showing the picture of an astronaut from the **I Can Be... Series**. Give each student a piece of black and white construction paper. Ask them to draw an astronaut on the white paper to glue on the black paper. In white crayon, have the students use the word wall to write a brief description of an astronaut. If available, give students star stickers to place around the astronaut.

## **Materials:**

Large paper or white board for word wall, black and white construction paper, white crayon, star stickers

## **Journal:**

Students will record whether they would like this job or not. Students should be encouraged to expand on their choice by drawing a picture and/or writing an explanation.

## **Independent Learning Center Activity:**

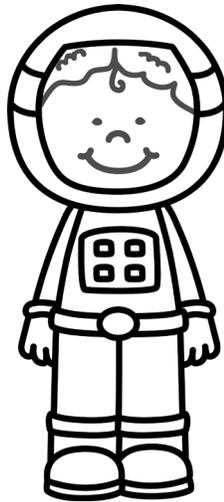
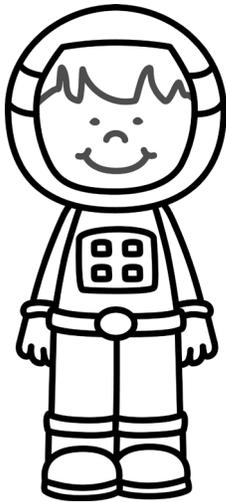
- **Why I Would Like to be an Astronaut:** Ask the students to write why they would like to be an astronaut and why they would be good at it.
- **Book of Facts:** Have students use words from the word wall to create a mini book with facts about astronauts. Students can illustrate each fact.
- **On the Moon:** Ask the students to imagine they are an astronaut on the moon. Have them explain what they are wearing, what they are doing, what they are seeing, and how it feels to be on the moon.

## **Workplace Connection:**

Organize a night viewing of the planets and stars on school property for parents and kids.

## **Evaluation/Comments:**

# Astronaut



**What I like about being an astronaut is**

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**What I don't like about being an astronaut is**

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**Who do I know in my community who is an astronaut?**

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**Why is it important to have an astronaut in your community?**

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