



The First Person In Space

The first person in space was Yuri Gagarin. Yuri was born in Russia in 1934. His dad was a carpenter. Yuri didn't want to be a carpenter. He wanted to be a pilot. He didn't want to make tables. He wanted to reach for the skies!

Yuri joined the Air Force in 1955. He was 21 years old. His dream was coming true.

Yuri loved flying. He loved flying so much, he wanted to fly even higher. He looked up at night and saw the stars. They seemed so far away. He wondered what it was like up there? He wanted to find out.

Yuri didn't want to be a pilot anymore. He wanted more. He wanted to be an astronaut!

It wasn't easy. Yuri had to pass a lot of tests. Yuri kept going and never gave up. He never gave up.

There were eighteen astronauts who wanted to go to space. Only one was allowed to go. Only the best one would be chosen. Yuri was chosen. He was the best. He was also small enough to fit in the rocket!

On the 12th of April 1961, Yuri put on his space suit. The time had come. It was time to go to space. He was scared and nervous. But he was also excited. No one had ever gone to space before! Ever! He was going to be the first.

The engines started rumbling. The rocket was getting ready. There was a

RETRIEVAL FOCUS

1. Where was Yuri Gagarin born?
2. How many astronauts wanted to go to space?
3. What date did Yuri go to space?
4. How long was Yuri in space?

countdown.

Yuri was calm. He said, "Let's go".

Blast off!

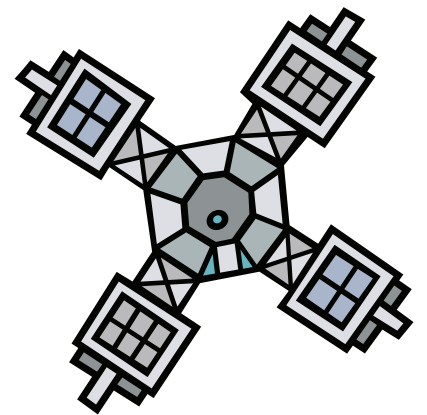
The rocket flew up into the sky. It kept going. Higher and higher. It was so noisy. Everything was shaking. Yuri could hear the rocket rattling. Was he going to make it?

Then, it became quiet. So quiet. He looked out the window. He could see the beautiful Earth. It seemed so far away. He could see the green colour of the land. He could see the blue of the sea. He was in space!

He was in space for nearly two hours. Then it was time to go home.

Going home was scary. The rocket was shaking again. Even more than before. It was loud again. Even louder than before. Yuri felt like he was being crushed. It was going so fast. He had to try stay alive. It was time to escape the rocket.

He parachuted out. Then fell slowly through the sky. He landed gently. His feet were on the soil. He was home. He had done it. He was the first person in space.



VIPERS QUESTIONS

I Why did Yuri no longer want to be a pilot?

V What word means the rocket was shaking a lot?

Beautiful higher rattling

I Why was going home to Earth so scary?

R What could Yuri see from space?

Answers

1. Russia

2. 18

3. 12th of April 1961

4. 2 hours / nearly 2 hours

I: He wanted to be an astronaut

V: Rattling

I: The rocket was loud and shaking

R: Earth / Land / The sea