



## The New Frontier and the Great Society

### PRIMARY SOURCE READING

### *America's Fascination with the "Final Frontier"*

*When the Soviets put a man into orbit, President Kennedy increased the pressure on the U.S. space program. Only eight years later, the United States was the first nation to successfully land on the moon's surface. America's love affair with its space program was in full bloom. But in 1986 the nation and the world had a shock. On January 28, upon its launch into space, the space shuttle Challenger exploded, killing its entire crew. One of the passengers on that shuttle was a teacher, Christa McAuliffe. The following excerpt is from the essay portion of McAuliffe's application to be chosen to ride on the Challenger.*

#### *"I Touch the Future. . . ."*

"I remember the excitement in my home when the first satellites were launched. . . . My parents were amazed and I was caught up with their wonder. In school, my classes would gather around the TV and try to follow the rocket as it seemed to jump all over the screen. I remember when Alan Shepard made his historic flight—not even an orbit—and I was thrilled. John Kennedy inspired me with his words about placing a man on the moon, and I still remember a cloudy, rainy night driving through Pennsylvania and hearing the news that the astronauts had landed safely.

"As a woman, I have been envious of those men who could participate in the space program and who were encouraged to excel in the areas of math and science. I felt that women had indeed been left outside of one of the

most exciting careers available. When Sally Ride and the other women began to train as astronauts, I could look among my students and see ahead of them an ever-increasing list of opportunities.

"I cannot join the space program and restart my life as an astronaut, but this opportunity to connect my abilities as an educator with my interests in history and space is a unique opportunity to fulfill my early fantasies. I watched the Space Age being born and I would like to participate." . . .

"In developing my course, *The American Woman*, I have discovered that much of the information about the social history of the United States has been found in diaries, travel accounts and personal letters. This social history of the common people, joined with our military, political and economic history, gives my students an awareness of what the whole society was doing at a particular time in history. They get the complete story. Just as the pioneer travelers of the Conestoga wagon days kept personal journals, I, as a pioneer space traveler, would do the same.

"My journal would be a trilogy. I would like to begin it at the point of selection through the training for the program. The second part would cover the actual flight. Part three would cover my thoughts and reactions after my return.

"My perceptions as a non-astronaut would help complete and humanize the technology of the Space Age. Future historians would use my eyewitness accounts to help in their studies of the impact of the Space Age on the general population."

*From I Touch the Future... by Robert T. Hohler. Copyright © 1986 by Robert T. Hohler. Reprinted by permission of Random House, Inc.*

**■ UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU READ** After you have finished reading the selection, answer the following questions in the space provided.

1. What was Christa McAuliffe's first exposure to the space program?

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2. Why did McAuliffe feel so connected to the space program?

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3. In what ways was McAuliffe envious of men? Why?

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4. What led McAuliffe to see in her students' futures opportunities that had not been readily available to her?

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5. Do you think McAuliffe's insights as a non-astronaut would have proved useful to the space program? To history?

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### ACTIVITY

Write an essay like the one McAuliffe wrote for her entry into the space shuttle program. Choose a goal you would like to attain. Write at least one page about why the goal is important to you and what you would be willing to do to reach it.

## PRIMARY SOURCE

1. She was caught up in her parents' excitement over the wonders of space during the launching of the satellites.
2. She felt that she watched the Space Age being born. She felt that she watched it grow, and she had a sense of pride about the launches, the lunar landings, etc.
3. She was envious that men were the only ones who could participate in the space program in its early days. She also felt that women were cheated because men were encouraged to excel in math and the sciences, and women were not.
4. the fact that Sally Ride and other women began to train as astronauts
5. Most students will feel that a non-astronaut would have plenty of insights for the public about a world in which they do not have much knowledge. Because McAuliffe was a teacher and lived what was considered to be the life of an average citizen, it was thought her views would be easily understandable by the general public. U.S. history would have an excellent primary source written by an intelligent, educated woman about an experience that few before her had ever had.

## ACTIVITY

Students' essays will vary widely. Encourage students to choose a goal for which they would have to work hard. You might wish to have students trade essays with a classmate and read each other's work aloud.

## BIOGRAPHY

1. He was the campaign manager for John F. Kennedy's U.S. Senate bid in 1952.
2. He had a brief professional association with politicians like Senator Joseph McCarthy and, as such, was seen to represent the interests of the committees they headed.
3. He prosecuted civil rights cases. Prosecuting these types of cases helped his career; students' answers will vary as to why.
4. Civil Rights Act of 1964

## ACTIVITY

Examples can be drawn to support both sides of the debate but they should be realistic and possibly reflect current issues where people have taken a stand and it either made a difference or it did not. Students' examples should demonstrate an understanding of the intent of Kennedy's statement, which is a call to become active in affecting change.

# CHAPTER 31

## LITERATURE

1. Atticus is convinced that the higher court will let Tom go free or at least grant him a new trial.
2. He will go to the electric chair.
3. He believes that in the state of Alabama, a black person is not partly guilty—it is either all or nothing. So, in Atticus's opinion, the jury would either acquit Tom, or give him the death penalty, but they would not take the more moderate step of a 20-year prison sentence.
4. He believes that without witnesses, all evidence is circumstantial.
5. Answers will vary. Many students will believe that a vast number of crimes are committed without witnesses, and that to some extent, the law must take stock of circumstantial evidence if that is all the evidence there is.
6. Most people will see by the way Atticus talks to his children that he is a good man. He is kind and seems fair; he believes in human dignity and teaches his children his interpretation of right from wrong.

## ACTIVITY

Students' responses will vary but should reflect an understanding of the reading.

## PRIMARY SOURCE

1. African American music
2. Students might mention that slavery followed by years of abuse and discrimination against African Americans are elements that might be considered "not pretty."