



## THE RACE FOR SPACE

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**T**HROUGHOUT HISTORY, HUMAN BEINGS HAVE GAZED ON THE STARS, BUT IN THE MID-20TH CENTURY, PEOPLE BEGAN TO REACH FOR THEM—LITERALLY. DURING THE 1950S AND '60S, SCIENTISTS IN BOTH THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION WORKED TO DEVELOP WAYS TO LAUNCH MEN INTO THE HEAVENS AND EVENTUALLY TO THE MOON. IN 1969, THIS GOAL WAS FINALLY

achieved when American astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin “Buzz” Aldrin of the Apollo 11 lunar mission became the first human beings to walk on the moon. Their steps forever changed the way humankind looked at Earth’s **SATELLITE**.

Centuries before Apollo 11 rocketed to the moon, though, people had looked to that heavenly body in wonder and admiration. Many cultures worshiped lunar gods or developed myths about figures such as the man in the moon. People the world over used the moon’s

**PHASES** as a calendar, and some cultures created **MEGALITHS** that may have served to record or predict the moon’s orbital pattern.

*Apollo 11’s  
advanced modules  
and rockets  
were constructed  
at facilities  
throughout  
Southern California  
and locations  
around the country.*



a telescope. His sketches revealed a surface covered with craters and mountains. Although Galileo did not see any water, he believed that any oceans on

Yet, for hundreds of years, people could only guess what the surface of the moon might look like. Around 1600, British scientist William Gilbert drew a map of the moon based on observations made with the naked eye. The map depicted Earth’s satellite as being much like Earth itself, with continents surrounded by oceans. Less than a decade later, the invention of the telescope aided humankind’s ability to see the features of the moon. In 1610, Italian scientist Galileo Galilei published drawings of the moon as seen through