What will you find out about space from an astronaut?
Lift-off!

3...2...1... Lift-off!
A space shuttle climbs high into the sky. Inside the shuttle, astronauts are on their way to learn more about space.

What is an astronaut?

An astronaut is a person who goes into space. Astronauts fly on a space shuttle. The space shuttle takes off like a rocket. It lands like an airplane.
Meet Eileen Collins.

Eileen Collins is an astronaut. She was the first woman to be a space shuttle pilot. She was also the first woman to be the leader of a space shuttle trip.

She and four other astronauts worked as a team. Some astronauts flew the space shuttle. Others did experiments.

How do astronauts live in space?

In the space shuttle, astronauts float everywhere. Sleeping bags are tied to walls. Toilets have a type of seat belt.

Astronauts exercise to stay strong. They take sponge baths to keep clean.
Why do astronauts go into space?

Astronauts test ways to live and work in a world that is very different from Earth. In space, there is no up and down, no air, and the sun always shines.

Astronauts do experiments. They look for problems and fix them. This will make space travel safer.
What tools do astronauts use?

A space shuttle is a giant toolbox! It holds tools, such as computers, that help fly the space shuttle. Astronauts use robot arms to move things and people outside the shuttle. On space walks, space suits keep astronauts safe.
The crew’s special job.

Eileen Collins and her crew had a special job to do. They took an X-ray telescope into space with them.

First, they tested the telescope. Next, they flipped some switches and let the telescope go into space. Then, the telescope used its rockets to fly higher into space.

Did the astronauts do other jobs too?

Yes. They did experiments with plants and exercise machines. They were studying life without gravity.

When there was some time to rest, the astronauts could look out their window. They saw Earth from many, many miles away!
Would you like to fly into space?

Do you like math and science? Do you like to visit new places? Do you like fast roller coasters? Astronauts do too! Maybe someday you will become an astronaut, just like Eileen Collins.