



British Science Week: Time

Celebrating science is an important factor of British Science Week, which happens every year in March. It enables us to appreciate some of the amazing scientific discoveries that have been made and encourages people to learn about science, technology, engineering and maths. This year's theme focuses on 'Time' and British Science Week is celebrating its 30th anniversary since starting in 1994.

2024 coincides with the 30th anniversary of the opening of the Channel Tunnel in 1994. This revolutionary form of eco-friendly travel helps to reduce carbon emissions in the atmosphere by linking England and France with an underground train tunnel (31.5 miles long) – making the commute shorter and cheaper.



Space Travel

The discoveries made over time about space travel have been revolutionary – from the first human on the Moon to the experience of space travel as a holiday for the space tourist.

How It All Began

In 1947, scientists began studying the possibility of human space exploration by sending fruit flies into space. By the 1950s, the Space Race between the USSR (a country called the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that existed from 1922-1991 and was also known as the Soviet Union) and America had begun in their quest to be the first to land on the Moon. On 3rd November 1957, the USSR made history by sending the dog Laika on the spacecraft Sputnik 2 into space.

Yuri Gagarin, a cosmonaut from the Soviet Union, was the first human to orbit the Earth, which he did in around two hours aboard the Vostok 1 on 12th April 1961. This was followed by what is considered to be one of the most momentous events in history when Neil Armstrong (with fellow astronauts Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins) travelled 240,000 miles on the spacecraft Apollo 11 and landed on the Moon on 20th July 1969. Once they had landed on the Moon, Armstrong declared, "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." This was a televised event broadcast around the world, signifying its impact as a monumental event in history.

During the 1960s and 1970s, NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) conducted the Apollo project. This enabled space travel to explode into life with monumental strides into exploration.

Dennis Tito, an American engineer, became the first space tourist in 2001– paying 20 million dollars for the honour! He was followed by other wealthy business people, such as Richard Branson and Jeff Bezos. Some private companies, such as SpaceX, Blue Origin and Virgin Galactic, have made space travel a business by enabling tourists to travel into orbit and for some, spend time at the ISS (International Space Station).

