



Webquest on the Wright Brothers and the Airplane
by
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Did you know that most people thought that the airplane had NO purpose for transportation and was considered just a dangerous sport? Learn more about the Wright Brothers and the history of early flight with this fun and informative webquest!

1. What gift did the brothers Wilbur, and his younger brother, Orville, receive

from their father as boys that got them fascinated with flight?

_____ What business did the brothers run before getting involved with building airplanes _____ Find the answers at this link: <http://www.nps.gov/wrbr/historyculture/theroadtothefirstflight.htm>

2. The Wright Brothers' first airplane was called the Wright Flyer. The first flight had speeds of 10 mph and reached an altitude of 10 ft. What childhood toy did the Wright brothers say sparked an interest in flight?

_____ rubber band powered toy helicopter. To whom did the brothers write to ask for a list of places with the beset winds to try their flying experiments? _____ National Weather Burer. Which brother did the first flight? _____ Find the answers at this link: <http://www.nps.gov/wrbr/historyculture/theroadtothefirstflight.htm>

3. On Dec. 17, 2003. a recreation of the historic flight took place . At what time did the first of four flights occur(longest being 59 seconds)?

_____ How long did the original flight last and what distance did it complete? _____ Find the answers at this link: http://www.wrightexperience.com/edu/12_17_03/html/index.htm

4. Look at the primary document of the Wright brothers' patent dated March/1903. Who was the commissioner who approved their patent application and what was the name of their invention?

_____ What's unusual about the date of their application? _____ Find the answers at this link: <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/images/vc004899.jpg>

5. Weighing 605 pounds, the Wright Brothers' Flyer 1 was constructed of spruce and ash wood, wires and was covered with white cotton cloth. Look at the photograph and explain how the Wright Brothers rode their plane?

_____ Look at the photographs to find the answer. Find the answers at this link: http://www.wright-brothers.org/History_Wing/Wright_Story/Inventing_the_Airplane/Inventing_the_Airplane_Intro.htm

6. The Wright brothers never said they were the FIRST to fly . Which Englishman may have tried it before them? _____ What DID the brother's claim about their flight? _____ Find the answers at this link:

http://www.wright-brothers.org/History_Wing/History_of_the_Airplane/

[Who Was First/Who Was First Intro/Who Was First Intro.htm](#)

7. Few people came out to witness the Wright Brothers attempt to fly on December 17, 1903. Despite notifying the newspapers, how many people showed up? _____ How many attempts to fly were made that day? _____ The longest flight was _____ feet and lasted for how long _____? Orville and Wilbur contacted their father to tell him of their achievement. Find the answers at this link: <http://www.nps.gov/wrbr/historyculture/thefirstflight.htm>

More fun facts related to “flying”:

8. Paper was invented by the people of China, dating back about 2000 years. What is the Japanese art of paper folding called? _____ Done in 2009, Takuo Toda held the record for the longest paper airplane flight. How long did his paper airplane, from one single sheet of paper, soar? _____ Find the answers at this link: <http://origami-blog.origami-kids.com/eng/guinness-world-record-for-paper-airplane-time-aloft.htm>

9. The first hot air balloons were designed by these two French brothers. _____ Burning straw, the heat inflated a silk bag that had a basket attached to it. In 1793, the first creatures in a hot air balloon went up in the sky to about 6000 ft. What were these three animals? _____ In the same year, who was the first human to go up in a tethered balloon and later an untethered balloon? _____ Find the answers at this link: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/space/short-history-of-ballooning.html>

Neat Facts:

1. The offer to sell the Wright Brothers' plan of their airplane to the US Army was turned down!(1905)

2. Most early thought was that the airplane had NO purpose for transportation and was just a dangerous sport.

3. Most papers (only three carried the story in the USA) refused to print the press release of the Wright Brothers historic flight, believing it was not possible for a human to fly and it had to be a hoax.

4. Every piece of the wrecked 1903 Flyer was collected by the brothers and packed into crates and stored in their bicycle shop. The Flyer was eventually reconstructed and placed in the Smithsonian Institute located in Washington, DC.

5. In 1908, Wilbur showed off the planes abilities in France while Orville did a demonstration at the same time near Washington, DC. for the US Army. People were beginning to believe that man could actually fly!

6. The distance covered by the 1903 Wright Flyer was less than the wingspan of today's 747 Jumbo Jet!

7. The first attempt went 120 ft. That's about 20 6ft people lined end to end!

Teacher Page:

Activities

Read a myth about early flight. Daedalus and his son, Icarus were locked up in a tower by a king. What did Daedalus make wings with to escape? What did he warn his son about flying and who happened to his son? Find the answers at:

http://www.kidsgen.com/stories/folk_tales/icarus_and_daedalus.htm

Answer: of wax and bird feathers/ not to fly too close to the sun/ wings melted and son drowned in the ocean.

Pretend you are Orville and Wilbur and write a journal about your experience flying the Wright Flyer on December 17, 1903.

Draw a picture of the Wright Flyer . Drawing arrows from the picture, write FIVE facts learned about the Wright Brothers and their historic flight!

Leonardo da Vinci sketched flying machines in his notebook(which he wrote backwards) in the 14th century. What did he call is early flying machine? What other flying device did he sketch? Find the answer at: <http://www.aryana.co.uk/webdesign/images/antony/leonardo.htm> (Answers: ornithopter/parachute)

Design a space craft of the future. What would be its fuel? Write a creative writing story about its first flight.

Make the Wright Brother's 1903 Flyer. See directions at this link: Wright Brother's <http://wright.nasa.gov/ROGER/1903model.htm>

In small groups, make a 7 questions comprehension review to exchange with another group to answer.

Wonderful photographs! <http://www.theatlantic.com/infocus/2014/08/first-flight-with-the-wright-brothers/100796/>

Resources:

<http://www.outerbanks.com/wrightbrothers/photographs/>

lots of primary documents

<http://firstflight.org/wrightbros.php> Images of Wright Brothers' flying designs

http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/wright/group_a.html Diary entry of Orville for the historic day

NOTE: In the News April, 2013:

Gustave Whitehead is being credited as having the FIRST successful powered flight in history (Bridgeport, CT, on August 14, 1901), two years before the Wright Brothers. Whitehead's craft, called the Condor, did two flights on that date. Reaching 50 Ft., the distance covered was 1 1/2 miles. Some argue that this didn't happen.

UPDATE:

On June 5, 2013, the Connecticut state senate passed a bill saying Whitehead was the first to fly in the United States. The measure still needs to be voted on before this recognition becomes Connecticut state law.

Teachers: Read more: <http://www.redorbit.com/news/science/1112869092/wright-bros-not-first-in-flight-whitehead-was-connecticut-061013/>

Things to discuss:

1. Do you think that history books will be changed to give Gustave Whitehead credit for what he did?
2. Why do you think this historic achievement didn't get recognized until now?
3. Write a journal pretending to be Whitehead and tell how you felt when you didn't get recognized for your accomplishment.
4. Did you know that in 2010, the city of Bridgeport erected a memorial honoring Whitehead?
5. Conduct an interview with a two students being the Wright Brothers, one student being Gustave Whitehead. What might the conversation be when the three first meet?

More articles on this News Story:

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505263_162-57577256/wright-brothers-were-they-really-the-first-to-fly/

<http://www.fairfieldcitizenonline.com/news/article/Fairfield-First-in-Flight-From-museum-to-4355648.php>

<http://www.stratfordstar.com/6185/letters-debate-whitehead-first-in-flight-claims/>

KEY:

1. A flying toy made of cork and bamboo. It had a paper body and was powered by rubber bands/bike
2. rubber band powered toy helicopter/National Weather Bureau/Orville
3. 10:35 a.m. and lasted 12 seconds, traveling 120 feet.
4. FI Allen / flying machine. Applied 9 months before they actually tried out their invention to see if it worked!
5. Lying prone, head forward and left hand holding controls
6. Hiram Maxim but his plane crashed/first controlled and sustained powered flight

7. Five/ too cold and didn't think it would work/ their father
8. 5/4/852 ft. and 59 sec.
9. Montgolfier brothers/sheep,rooster,duck/Jean-François Pilâtre De Rozier



Replica of the Wright Brothers Flyer at Wright Brothers National Memorial, Kitty Hawk, NC.

by Gail Hennessey

Note: Photograph of the Wright Brothers Type A Flyer from:<http://publicdomainclip-art.blogspot.com/search?q=wright+brothers>

