

READING FOR SOCIAL STUDIES

Making Generalizations—Multiple Choice

Directions: Use the information in the passage and your knowledge of U.S. history to answer the questions.

During the 1960s the Americans were involved in a “space race” with the Soviet Union. The ultimate goal of the American space program was to land a person on the moon by the end of the decade.

The second phase of the space program was named Gemini, the astrological sign of the twins, because each mission involved two astronauts. This program lasted from April 1964 to November 1966. During these two years, astronauts perfected the techniques they would need to land safely on the moon and return home.

While they were learning these techniques, the astronauts also performed a number of other experiments. As part of these experiments, a large number of photographs of the Earth were taken. These photographs had wide applications for geologists, oceanographers, and meteorologists. When people on Earth saw the planet for the first time as a beautiful blue and green ball floating in the vast sea of space, they began to sense the vulnerability of the Earth and its resources. The impact of this insight on the growth of the environmental movement cannot be underestimated. Some authors say this view of the Earth may be the most important achievement of the Gemini program.

- Which of the following generalizations best states the purpose of the Gemini missions?
 - to send more astronauts into space than the Soviets had
 - to learn the techniques needed to land an astronaut on the moon
 - to teach astronauts to get along in the confines of their space capsule
 - to launch communications satellites
- A good title for this passage would be
 - “America Plays Catch-up with the Soviets.”
 - “The Path to the Moon.”
 - “America’s Investment in the Space Program.”
 - “The Benefits of the Gemini Space Program.”

Test Your Knowledge

What were some of the technological innovations that were achieved by the American space program of the 1960s, and what were some of the changes produced by these innovations?