Space Talk

These words and definitions are to help you better understand some of the words used and other important ideas about space travel.

NASA - National Aeronautics and Space Administration, which is the government agency in charge of space exploration.

Artificial Gravity - A pretend gravity established inside a spacecraft by turning around or speeding up.

Crew - The Commander, the Pilot, and Mission Specialists (scientists) are members of the crew.

Crew Exploration Vehicle - Spacecraft designed to explore deep space. The spacecraft turns around as it travels in space, which makes artificial gravity. Artificial gravity is healthier for the astronauts.

Deep Space - Any region in space outside our solar system.

Dock - Connect two spacecraft together to make one large spacecraft.

Gravity - The force that attempts to pull objects back to the surface of Earth.

International Space Station - Spacecraft, or satellite, designed to be occupied by a crew for extended periods of time and used as a base for the exploration, observation, and research of space.

Lunar Lander - Spacecraft designed to land on the Moon.

Orbit - The path followed by an object in space as it travels around another object.

Planet - A very large object in orbit around a star (the Sun in our solar system). Planets can be composed mainly of rock or of dense gases.

Robot - A mechanical tool for performing a task that could be done by a human; a machine that can move automatically. Robots are used when the job might be dangerous for a human.

Robot Arm - The robot arm (also called the Remote Manipulator System (RMS)) is controlled from inside the shuttle and is used to help build the International Space Station.

Rover - A six-wheeled robot used to gather information about Mars.

Solar System - The Sun and all things orbiting around it, including the nine major planets, their satellites (moons), and all the asteroids and comets.

Space Shuttle - Reusable spacecraft designed to transport people and supplies between Earth and space. The shuttle launches with an external fuel tank and two solid rocket boosters that are separated from the Space Shuttle when they are no longer needed.