



NEIL ARMSTRONG TELLS HIS STORY: FROM AIRPLANES TO THE MOON

Note: This story is like a fun chat with Neil Armstrong himself. It's based on real facts but told in his voice to help you imagine what it might have been like.

Hi! I'm Neil Armstrong. I want to share my adventure from being a curious kid who loved flying to becoming the first person to walk on the Moon.

I was born on August 5, 1930, in a small town called Wapakoneta, Ohio. When I was about six years old, I took my very first airplane ride. I remember feeling like I was flying with the birds. That's when I knew I wanted to fly planes someday.

By the time I was 15, in 1945, I had already earned my pilot's license. That means I could fly an airplane before I even had a driver's license for cars! I was so excited to learn everything about flying.

In 1947, I started studying aerospace engineering at Purdue University. But soon, I had to pause school because I joined the Navy during the Korean War. From 1950 to 1952, I flew 78 combat missions. It was dangerous, but I loved flying and serving my country.

After the war, I finished my college degree in 1955. Then I became a test pilot, flying many experimental airplanes. Some flew faster than sound, and some even came close to flying into space! Being a test pilot was exciting but sometimes scary.

In 1962, NASA picked me to become an astronaut. The training was hard — we learned how to handle spacecraft, fix problems in space, and even survive underwater for emergencies. I loved the challenge.

My first space trip was on March 16, 1966, aboard Gemini 8. During the mission, our spacecraft suddenly started spinning out of control. I had to quickly figure out how to stop it. Thankfully, I was able to save the mission and bring us back safely.

Then came the biggest adventure of all. On July 16, 1969, I blasted off with my crew on Apollo 11, heading for the Moon. After a four-day journey, the lunar module separated, and I prepared to land.



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On July 20, 1969, I stepped onto the Moon. I remember saying, “*That’s one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.*” Walking on the Moon was amazing — the surface was dusty and gray, and I could see Earth shining far away. I even had to have a special passport because technically, I was returning to Earth from another country!

After spending about two and a half hours exploring, collecting rocks, and setting up experiments, we headed back home.

We landed safely in the Pacific Ocean on July 24, 1969, where a ship was waiting to pick us up.

In 1971, I retired from NASA and became a professor of aerospace engineering. I wanted to help teach and inspire young people to explore and dream big.

Epilogue

I passed away on August 25, 2012, but I hope my journey reminds you that with curiosity, courage, and hard work, you can reach for the stars and maybe even step where no one has before.