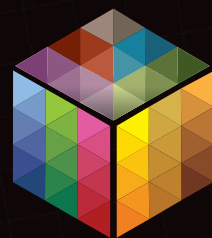


California **CCSS**

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LITERACY™



INTERACTIVE READER • Volume C







# INTERACTIVE READER

## VOLUME C

### Secondary System

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# One Giant

By Dawn M. Woodward

# Leap



## Build Background

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## Annotations

Have you ever dreamed of blasting off into outer space? If you have, you're not alone. Going into space is a dream that many people of all ages share, but few see it come to fruition. There are different ways to be part of the space program. Space exploration requires the talents of engineers, mechanics, physicists, and of course, astronauts. Becoming an astronaut is not easy. Many men and women work and train for years simply to be considered for the space program. To be accepted, candidates must pass challenging physical and psychological tests. They must also have a working knowledge of science and engineering. The National Aeronautic and Space Administration, or NASA, also prefers that astronauts have experience as a pilot. In addition to formal education and training, most astronauts have great courage, determination, and perseverance.

Men and women of all nationalities have taken part in the world's space programs. The United States, Russia, and China have the top three space programs in the world. Many individuals of Hispanic origin have also gone into space. To date, seventeen Hispanics have flown in NASA space missions.



## Focus Questions

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Hispanic women play major roles at NASA locations across the United States. Hispanic women work for NASA as engineers, lawyers, researchers, and scientists. Some are astronauts who help plan and participate in space-exploration missions.

The first Hispanic woman in space was Ellen Ochoa, one of five children of a single mother. She made a name for herself in both the space program and as an engineer. As a small girl, Ochoa was interested in space, science, engineering, and medicine. She dedicated her life to education, eventually earning a PhD in Electrical Engineering from Stanford University. Ochoa currently serves as the first Hispanic director of the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. As well as being a former NASA astronaut, Ochoa is an engineer and inventor. She helped to create optical information processing systems that are able to recognize objects and detect errors in repeating patterns. This can be helpful for quality control in manufacturing. At NASA's Ames Research Center in California, Ochoa led a team of thirty-five scientists and engineers that developed special computer systems used in space missions.

## Annotations

## Focus Questions

## Annotations

Franklin Chang-Diaz was only thirty-one when he became the first Hispanic to go to space. Following his first space flight, Chang-Diaz went on six other missions into space. He became the world-record holder for space flights by flying in seven missions. Like Ochoa, as a young child Chang-Diaz dreamed of going into space. Chang-Diaz received a PhD in plasma physics from Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Through hard work, education, and determination, he became chairman and CEO of Ad Astra Rocket, a company specializing in space technology systems. He is also a writer and educator in the fields of science and technology.

Two Hispanics in the field of astronomy are Michael López-Alegria and José Hernández. López-Alegria was the first Hispanic man to walk in space. He also holds the record for taking the longest space flight—a space mission that lasted a total of two hundred and fifteen days. Can you imagine being in space for an entire school year?



## Focus Questions

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José Hernández came from meager beginnings and expected to work in the fields picking crops like his parents and grandparents. But inspiration struck him in 1972 when, at the age of ten, he watched and listened as Walter Cronkite described the first moon walk. The young Hernández spent the evening alternating between watching the moon landing on television and going outside to observe the moon in the sky. What he heard and saw became a defining moment in his life. It was then that Hernández knew he wanted to be an astronaut. The road to realizing his dream was long and difficult. Despite many obstacles, Hernández's perseverance paid off. He applied to NASA's astronaut training program ten times before being accepted. In 2009, the little boy who picked strawberries alongside his mother became an astronaut aboard the space shuttle Discovery.

Whether your dreams have you walking on the moon or exploring stars through a telescope, you can turn them into reality. For each of the astronauts mentioned, the idea of going into outer space once seemed impossible. Through hard work and dedication, these individuals achieved their dreams and much, much more. As Ellen Ochoa once said when asked about becoming an astronaut, "The opportunities I had were a result of having a good educational background. Education is what allows you to stand out." So whatever your dream might be, go for it! Work hard in school, believe in yourself, and reach for the stars.

## Focus Questions