

TAKING FLIGHT WITH THE WRIGHT BROTHERS



Find out how these **inspiring** aviators took to the skies.

It's a **chilly, breezy** day in December 1903. Wilbur Wright stands on the beach in Kitty Hawk,

North Carolina, **staring** at the sky above him. **Soaring overhead** in an airplane is his brother Orville—he's in the middle of the world's first **successful piloted** engine-powered airplane flight.

Today the Wright brothers are remembered as **innovative** engineers, and their history-making flight inspired **generations** of future **fliers**.

Vocabulary word Meaning

Inspiring / inspire

To make people want to do something.

Chilly

Cold.



<i>Breezy</i>	Windy.
<i>Staring / stare</i>	Look for a long time.
<i>Soaring / soar</i>	Flying high.
<i>Overhead</i>	Over the top of your head. Above you.
<i>Successful</i>	Something that works well, and does not fail.
<i>Piloted</i>	With a pilot inside. With a person flying it.
<i>Innovative</i>	Doing things in a new and different way.
<i>Generations</i>	All of the people born and living at about the same time
<i>Fliers</i>	People who fly planes and helicopters

GROWING UP WRIGHT

The Wright brothers were interested in flying from a young age. As children in Dayton, Ohio, their favorite toy was a small helicopter-like object that was powered by a rubber band to **twirl** its **blades**.

Fascinated by the toy and its **mechanics**, the brothers hoped to one day build a flying machine big enough to hold them both.

<i>Vocabulary word</i> <i>Meaning</i>	
<i>Twirl</i>	Spin around.
<i>Blades</i>	Thin, wide spinning parts of a helicopter, fan, or propeller.
<i>Fascinated</i>	Very interested
<i>Mechanics</i>	The machinery or working parts of something.

As young men, the brothers went into business together, first **operating** a printing press, then a bicycle **repair** shop. Eventually the **duo** began selling their own custom-made bicycles to customers.

But the brothers never lost their love of flying. At the time, other **aircrafts** such as **gliders**—or aircrafts without engines—did exist, but the Wrights wanted to add more power to the objects they were flying. In 1899 the brothers began **experimenting** with building their own **aircrafts**.

<i>Vocabulary word</i> <i>Meaning</i>	
<i>Operate / Operating</i>	Making something work
<i>Repair</i>	Fix. Mend. Make something that

is broken work again.

Duo Two people.

Aircrafts Planes, Helicopters, Gliders – anything that can fly up in the air.

Gliders Planes without engines that fall slowly ('Glide') to the ground.

Experiment / Experimenting Trying new things to see what works.



UP, UP, AND AWAY

In 1900 the brothers **traveled** from Ohio to Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, to begin their flight **experiments**. The **oceanside** dunes at Kitty Hawk had regular **breezes** and soft,

sandy **landing surfaces**—perfect for their studies.

The brothers first **conducted** tests with kites before **experimenting** with gliders. Both Orville and Wilbur separately **piloted** the **gliders** during their testing process.



<i>Vocabulary word</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<i>Travel / Traveled</i>	Go / Went
<i>Oceanside</i>	Next to the ocean/ sea
<i>Breezes</i>	Winds
<i>Landing surfaces</i>	Places to land a plane
<i>Conduct / Conducted</i>	Do / Did

In 1903 the brothers built an airplane called the Wright Flyer I, which had wooden **propellers** the men had made and built themselves. The plane also had a petrol engine.

After weeks of unsuccessful attempts, the craft—with extra **fabric** put on it to increase the **stiffness** of the wings—took flight for 12 seconds on December 17, 1903, traveling 120 feet before landing. The plane worked! Both brothers flew the craft a few more times that day. They had flown the world's first successful **piloted** engine-powered airplane.

<i>Vocabulary word</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<i>Propellers</i>	The part which spins and makes a plane fly
<i>Fabric</i>	Cloth. Material that clothes are made from.
<i>Stiffness</i>	How hard or tough something is.

WINGS OF CHANGE

After their **success** in North Carolina, the Wright brothers kept on **travelling** around the world, **perfecting** their craft and changing their designs. But they did so much more, starting the **era** of modern **aviation** and **inspiring** future **adventurers**.

Vocabulary word *Meaning*

<i>Perfecting</i>	To make something as good as it can be.
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<i>Era</i>	Age / Time
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<i>Aviation</i>	Flying
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<i>Adventurers</i>	People who enjoy adventure and excitement.
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The **decades** following Kitty Hawk were filled with **accomplishments** in **aviation**, including the first **solo** flight across the Atlantic Ocean and the first **passenger flight**. And, of course, flight didn't just stay in this world—a little over 65 years after the Wrights' famous first flight, **astronauts** Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin walked on the moon. The Wright brothers didn't just fly the first **piloted** engine-powered

airplane—they created a whole new way for us to explore our world.

<i>Vocabulary word</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
<i>Decades</i>	10 years (1990's, 1910's, 1920's)
<i>Accomplishments</i>	Great things that have been done
<i>Solo</i>	One person on their own
<i>Passenger flight</i>	A flight with people on it who are going somewhere.
<i>Astronauts</i>	People who go into space.