

The Wright Brothers

Name: _____

The Wright brothers were inventors and aviation pioneers that invented and built the first successful airplane. Their airplane became the first controlled, powered, and sustained flight in human history. Known as pioneers, Orville and Wilbur's inventions gave the science of aviation a huge push into the 1900's.

Wilbur was born in 1867, and his brother, Orville, was born in 1871. Their interest in aviation came when their father brought them a toy helicopter in 1878. The helicopter was made of paper, bamboo, and cork, with a rubber band to twist its rotor. Between the two boys, the helicopter was quickly broken. Instead of being upset, they built their own helicopter using materials from around their house. In their writings, it is the childhood toy that is attributed to their interest in aviation. In 1881, the boys built kites as a hobby.

In the year of 1900, the brothers traveled to Kitty Hawk, North Carolina to begin their flying experiments. It is suggested that the Wright brothers chose Kitty Hawk because of the strong breezes that the Atlantic Ocean had to offer. The Wrights constructed gliders in 1900, 1901, and 1902. A glider is a type of plane without an engine that relies on wind for flight.

The brothers began using engines in their gliders in 1902. The first flight with an engine was on December 14, 1903. It was flown by Wilbur, and resulted in a stall of the engine. After several shorter successful flights, the Wright brothers sent a message to their father to inform the press. The press was not too interested because of the short distances that the flights covered. After much frustration, the Wright brothers left Kitty Hawk on December 3, 1903.

On May 22, 1905, the Wright brothers were granted a patent by the United States Patent Office for a flying machine. The brothers won a bid in 1908 to build the United States military a flying machine. In 1909, the brothers were awarded a Congressional Medal for their contribution towards aviation. Wilbur died in 1912 of Typhoid Fever. In 1915, Orville sold his airplane company. Orville died in 1948 of a heart attack.

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FILL IT:

CIRCLE IT:

1. What do you think "aviation" means?
2. What did the first paragraph mention about how the Wright brothers are known?
3. What gave the science of aviation a push into the 1900's?
4. When did the Wright brothers move to Kitty Hawk to begin their flying experiments?
5. Why wasn't the press interested in their first flights?
6. When did Orville sell his airplane company? In your opinion, what do you think the effect of the sale was?

1. What did the Atlantic Ocean offer the Wright brothers?
 - a. money
 - b. strong breezes
 - c. fame
 - d. wet conditions
2. What were the Wrights awarded in 1909?
 - a. A check from the government
 - b. A Congressional Medal
 - c. A position in Congress
 - d. A ribbon from Kitty Hawk
3. When did the Wright brothers leave Kitty Hawk out of frustration?
 - a. 1913
 - b. 1908
 - c. 1903
 - d. 2003
4. Which of the following is a type of plane without an engine?
 - a. glass
 - b. gunslinger
 - c. glider
 - d. airplane

TIMELINE IT WITH DATES

Use events from the passage to fill in the timeline of the the lives of the Wright brothers.

1867 -

1871 -

1878 -

1881 -

1900 -

1900 -

1901 -

1902 -

1903 --

1903 -

1905 -

1909 -

1912 -

1915 -

1948 -

WRITE IT:

Why do you think the Wright brothers were so interested in flying? Use references from the text to defend your opinion.

[illegible]