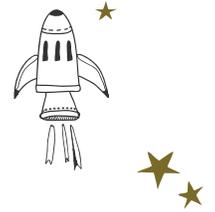
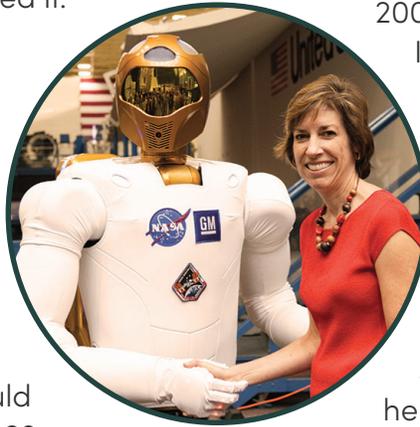


# INFORMATIONAL READING COMPREHENSION: Biography of Ellen Ochoa



Continue reading, and then answer the questions that follow.

6 Ochoa officially became an astronaut in 1991. She went into space for the first time in 1993, serving as a mission specialist aboard the space shuttle *Discovery*. On this nine-day mission, she and the crew studied Earth's atmosphere and how the sun affected it. Ochoa went into space three more times, spending a total of over 40 days and nearly 1,000 hours in space. In 1999, she was a member of the first space shuttle crew to dock on the new International Space Station (ISS). The space shuttle carried supplies for other astronauts who would later live aboard the ISS and cranes that would be used to continue building it. In 2002, Ochoa returned to the ISS, where she operated robotic arms to help assemble the station.



7 On her 1999 mission, Ochoa brought an **artifact** with her into space to celebrate the contributions of women who paved the way and opened up new opportunities for women like herself. She and two fellow female

astronauts displayed the banner of the National Women's Party (NWP), the group of women who had fought for and helped win the right to vote for American women in 1920.

8 After Ochoa's final mission into space in 2002, she continued to work for NASA. In 2013, she became the first Hispanic woman director of the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. Ochoa has received numerous awards for her service, including the Distinguished Service Medal, NASA's highest award. At least six schools have been named in her honor, and she was inducted into the U.S. Astronaut Hall of Fame in 2017. Today, Ellen Ochoa's accomplishments inspire girls and women everywhere, Hispanic and non-Hispanic, to pursue their dreams in the fields of science and math.

Image: Ellen Ochoa, Deputy Director of NASA's Johnson Space Center, posing with Robonaut 2 in 2010.



Answer the following questions about the biography of Ellen Ochoa.

- Part A.** What is the most likely reason that, in 1969, Ochoa could not envision herself becoming an astronaut?

  - A. She was not interested in math and science at that time in her life.
  - B.** She had never seen someone who resembled herself do anything like that.
  - C. She thought it would be too scary and dangerous to go into space.
  - D. She wanted to become a professor at San Diego State University.

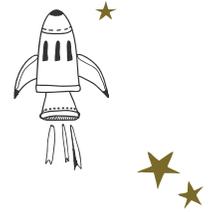
- Part B.** Explain your answer choice to Part A, citing at least one piece of evidence from the text.

Paragraph 2 says that the fields of math and science were not as open to women when Ochoa was young.

It can be hard to see yourself doing something if there are no role models that you can relate to.
- What is the meaning of the word **potential** as it is used in paragraph 1?

  - A.** possibilities
  - B.** desires
  - C.** disappointments
  - D.** interests

# INFORMATIONAL READING COMPREHENSION: Biography of Ellen Ochoa



Answer the following questions about the biography of Ellen Ochoa.

3. Based on the information in paragraphs 2–5, why was Ochoa likely so inspired by Sally Ride? Cite specific evidence from the text to support your answer.

Sally Ride was similar to Ochoa in many ways:  
she was a woman who'd studied physics in college  
and who had gone to Stanford University.  
These similarities helped Ochoa see herself  
becoming an astronaut like Sally Ride.

4. Besides Sally Ride, who else helped inspire Ochoa on her path to becoming a successful astronaut? List three people or groups of people, and briefly explain the influence of each.

Person/Group	Influence
a professor at her college	One of Ochoa's college professors encouraged her to seek a degree in science.
Ochoa's mother	Her mother modeled the importance of education, so Ochoa continued her academic studies.
the women of the NWP	These women paved the way for women to have more opportunities.

5. Paragraph 7 states that Ochoa brought an **artifact** with her on her 1999 mission. Based on context clues in the text, what kind of object is an artifact?

- A. decorative                      B. useful  
C. historical                        D. dangerous

6. Based on the text, what two “firsts” did Ochoa achieve in her career?
- A. She was the first American woman in space.  
B. She was the first Hispanic woman director of the Johnson Space Center.  
C. She was the first woman inducted into the Astronaut Hall of Fame.  
D. She was the first Hispanic woman to go into space.  
E. She was the first Hispanic person to go into space on four separate missions.

7. Write a short summary of the passage, including the most important ideas.

As a child, Ellen Ochoa never dreamed that  
she could one day become an astronaut, but she  
ended up becoming the first Hispanic woman to  
go into space. Even though she had few role  
models, Ochoa earned multiple degrees in  
science fields. When she saw that women like  
herself could go into space, she applied to  
become a NASA astronaut. Although she was  
rejected from the program at first, she continued  
her research in the field of optics and was  
eventually accepted. She went on four space  
missions and later became the first Hispanic  
woman to head the Johnson Space Center. Now,  
she inspires other women and girls to pursue  
careers in math and science.