

Goddard's liquid-fuel rocket

1926 | Grade 4 · Explain with evidence

Words to know

experiment — a planned test of an idea

invent — create a new tool, process, or idea

evidence — information that helps support or question a claim

Look closely



Portrait of Robert H. Goddard.

Read the story

Robert Goddard launched a liquid-fuel rocket in Auburn, Massachusetts. Its short flight helped open a new path in rocket research. Many tests and failures had come before this success.

The March 16 flight used gasoline and liquid oxygen. Goddard's work depended on experiments and collaborators. This is historical study, not a project to copy with dangerous fuels.

Think, talk, and show evidence

1. State the main idea. Support it with two details from the reading.
2. Explain a change or challenge described in the text. Which words support your answer?
3. Use one vocabulary word in a new sentence about this event.
4. What can the image and caption help explain? What can they not tell you?

Follow-up reading: Sacco and Vanzetti are executed

1927

Sacco and Vanzetti were executed after their controversial convictions. People in many countries protested. The case continued to raise questions about prejudice, evidence, and fairness in courts.

Their execution occurred seven years after arrest. Separate the stages of a case: arrest, trial, appeals, and punishment. Later judgments about fairness cannot undo the loss of life.

Compare the two readings. Explain one similarity or difference using a detail from each. Their order does not prove that one caused the other.

Teacher guide & source trail

Original classroom adaptation. Suggested reading levels are instructional choices, not standardized readability certifications. Use professional judgment and learner feedback.

ELA practice: RI.4.1: refer to details; RI.4.2: main idea and summary; RI.4.3: explain events; RI.4.7: interpret visual information; W.4.2 and SL.4.1: explain and discuss.

These tasks support selected skills in the [Massachusetts 2017 ELA framework](#); they do not establish mastery of an entire standard.

Answer guidance

Factual anchor: Robert Goddard launched a liquid-fuel rocket in Auburn, Massachusetts. Its short flight helped open a new path in rocket research. Many tests and failures had come before this success. The March 16 flight used gasoline and liquid oxygen. Goddard's work depended on experiments and collaborators. This is historical study, not a project to copy with dangerous fuels.

Accept accurate main ideas and explanations supported by the text. Vocabulary meanings are in the opening word bank. For picture questions, use the caption and credit below; distinguish what is visible from what is inferred. For comparison, accept a specific connection supported by both readings. Do not require personal accounts of trauma.

Continue the inquiry

[Research source for this event ↗](#)

[Research source for follow-up ↗](#)

[Event page, accessible HTML reading, and vocabulary game ↗](#)

Image: NASA · Public domain

[Image source and rights record ↗](#)

The PDF contains selectable English text and embedded fonts. For adjustable text and browser reading tools, use the event's [HTML page](#). External sources may need adult guidance.