

# BLACK WOMEN OF NASA

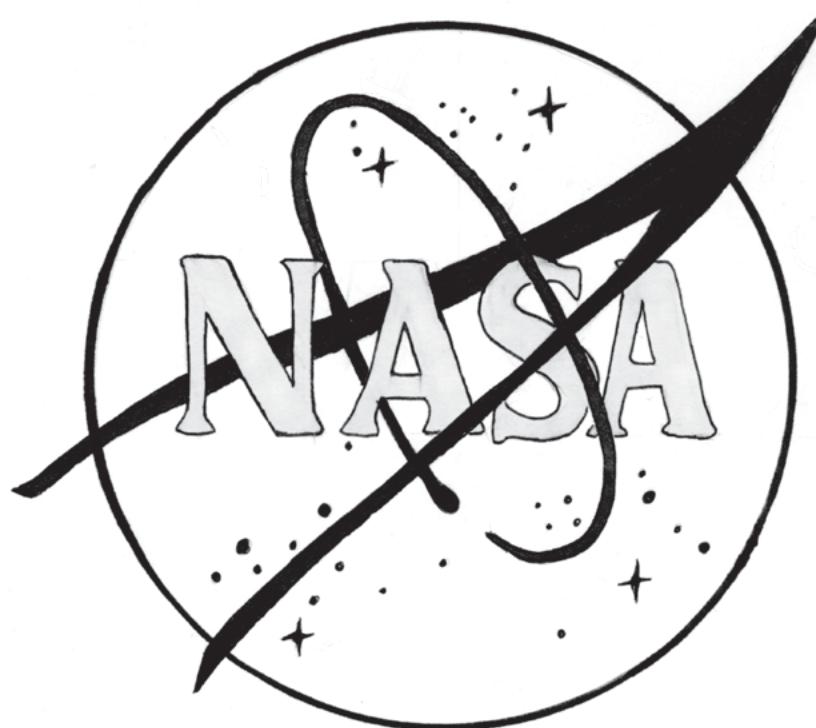


by Ariel Lepito



# BLACK WOMEN

of



an activity  
book

by Ariel Lepito

illustrations by Carmen Ribadeneira, Anne Rogers, Lydia Scott, & Judith Tong

book design by Jeremy Sparagon

cover design by Judith Tong

# WELCOME!

Hello and welcome to the Black Women of NASA activity book! Whether you're on a road trip, in a waiting room, or just procrastinating, I hope that this book can give you some joy as well as knowledge about a portion of African American women's history with NASA.

As you color, unscramble, or just read, keep in mind the systems of discrimination, mainly racism and sexism, that these women faced in their lives; which range from the 1930s to today.

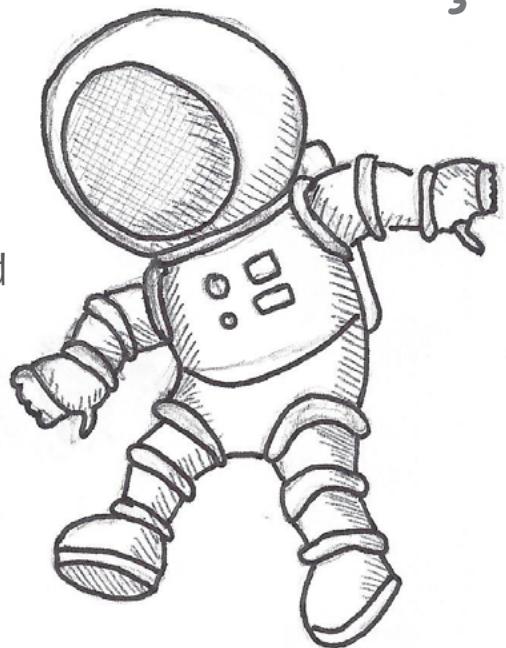
All of the women featured in this booklet are still alive today and continue to inspire on a global level. Some Black women of NASA not included in this booklet, but equally admirable, include Joan E. Higginbotham, Yvonne D. Cagle, Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson, Christine Darden. Of course, there are more.

I challenge you to learn something new and enjoy yourself throughout these activities.



## Make an Acrostic!

What does the word **astronaut** mean to you? Choose a word or phrase beginning with each letter of **astronaut**!



A

S

T

R

O

N

A

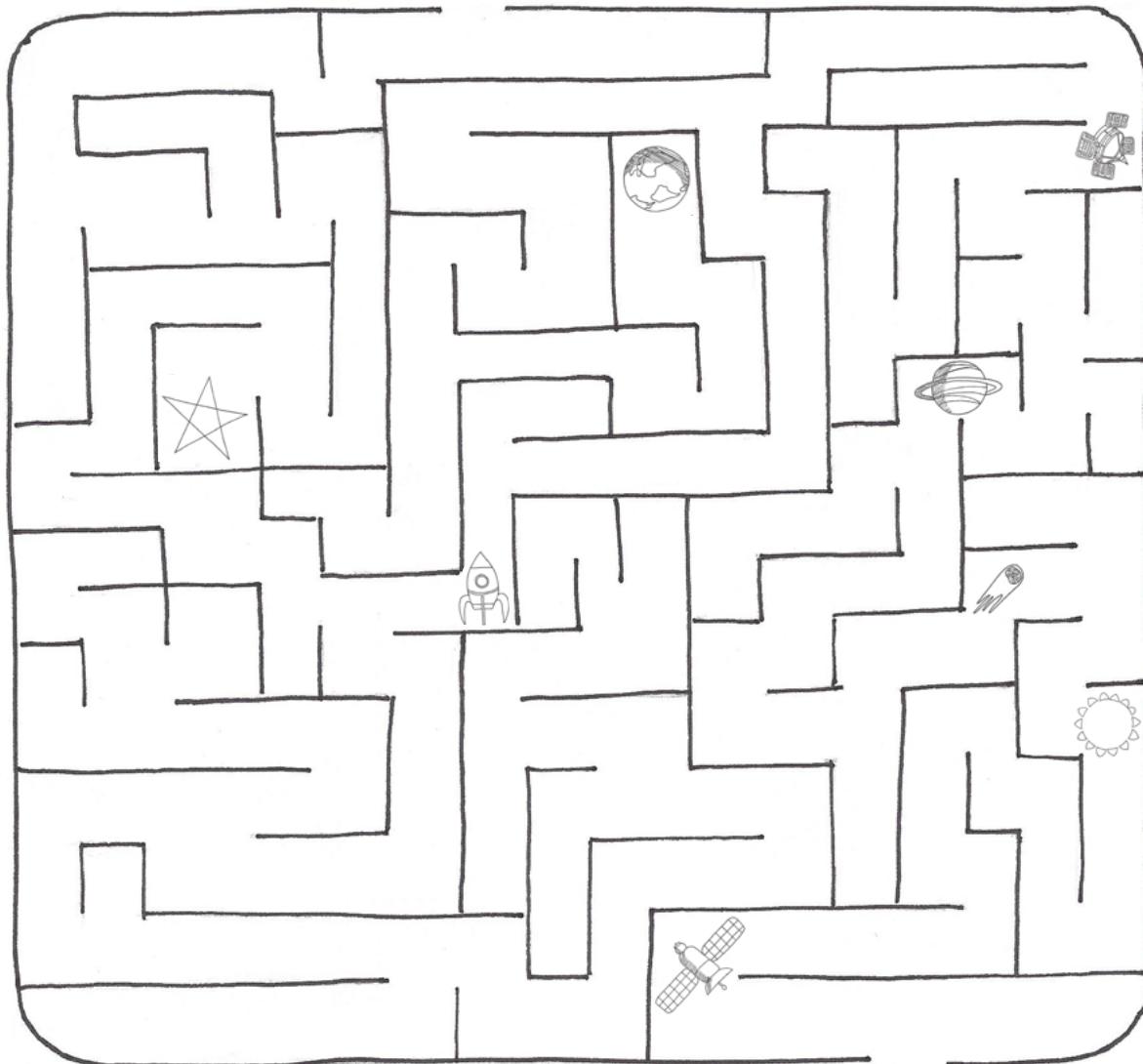
U

T



The path to becoming an astronaut at NASA is certainly not easy, especially as a Black woman. Let's take a look at how **Dr. Mae C. Jemison** made her way there!

**START**



**FINISH**



## ROADBLOCK!

In Kindergarten, Mae's teacher suggests she be a nurse instead of a scientist. Small discouragements like this were not uncommon for girls when she was growing up in the 50s and 60s.



In 1973, Mae Jemison graduates High School at 16 years old. She goes on to attend Stanford University, where she studies chemical engineering and African and Afro-American Studies.



## ROADBLOCK!

Some of Jemison's Professors made her feel invisible, as if her questions were not important. But that didn't stop her!



In 1977, Jemison graduates Stanford.



In 1981, she receives an M.D. from Cornell University.



From 1983-85, Dr. Jemison joins the Peace Corps and works as the Medical Officer in Sierra Leone and Liberia.



**Dr. Mae C. Jemison**



In 1987, she is among the few accepted to be an astronaut at NASA.



In 1992, she becomes the first African American woman in space aboard the Endeavor. Six months later, she leaves NASA to pursue other career goals in education. At the time, she was the only female astronaut of color. ☺

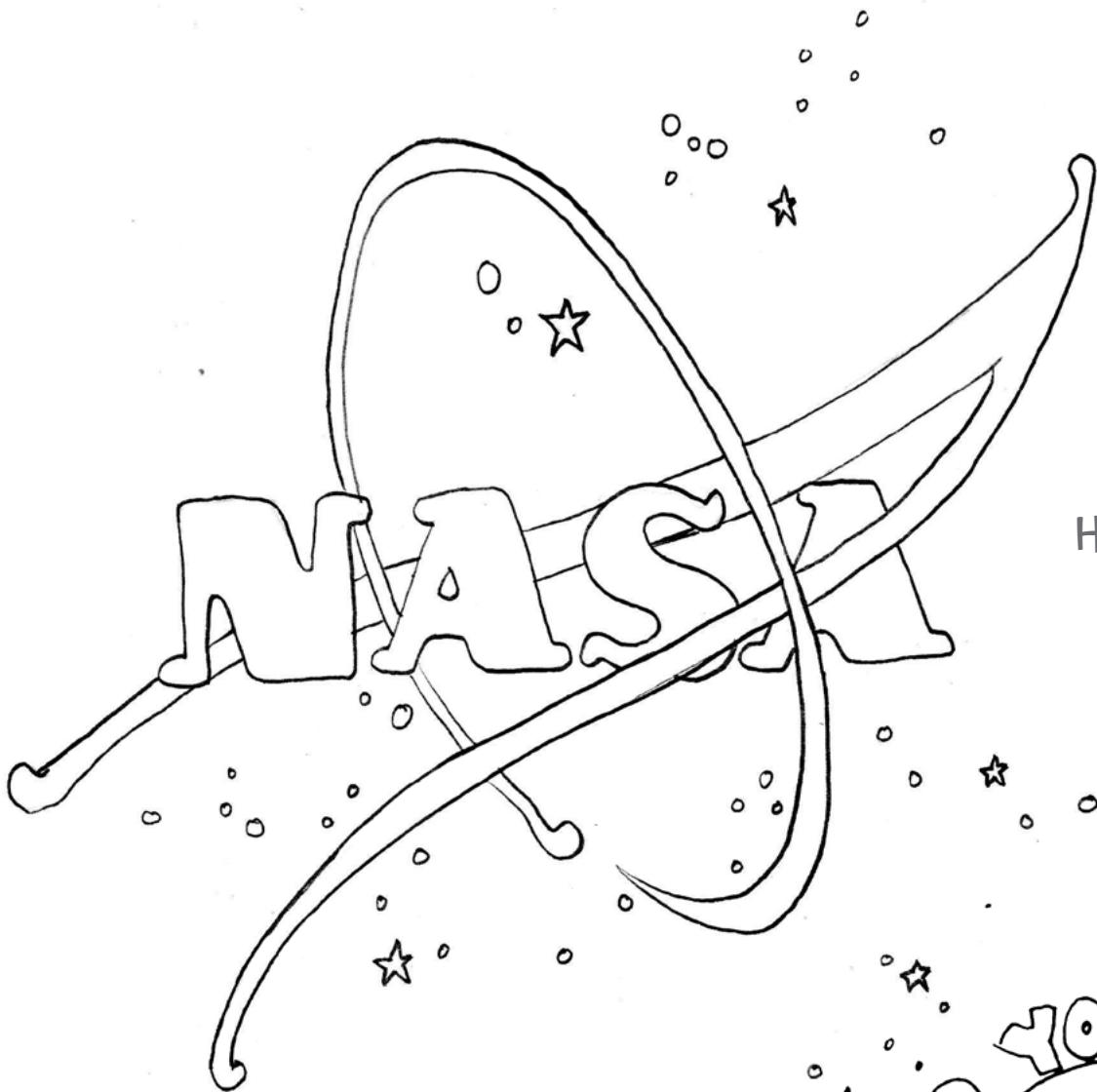
# Jeanette J. Epps

## WORD SEARCH

Find the words that are in **bold** below. (They could be forwards, backwards, or diagonal!)



"**Jeanette J. Epps** was born in NY in 1970. She received her BS in **Physics** from **LeMoyne** College in 1992, and then her MS (1994) and Doctorate of Philosophy in **Aerospace** Engineering (2000) from the University of **Maryland**. Before NASA, she worked for Ford and received two **patents** on her research. After that, she worked for the **CIA** for 7 years! In 2009 she joined NASA to become an **astronaut**. She did **Russian** Language training, **spacewalk** training (EVA), **robotics**, **geology**, and more. She was also a part of **NEEMO**, the NASA Extreme Environment Mission Operation." (NASA)



Let's color!

How would **you** like to  
see NASA's logo?



# Stephanie D. Wilson

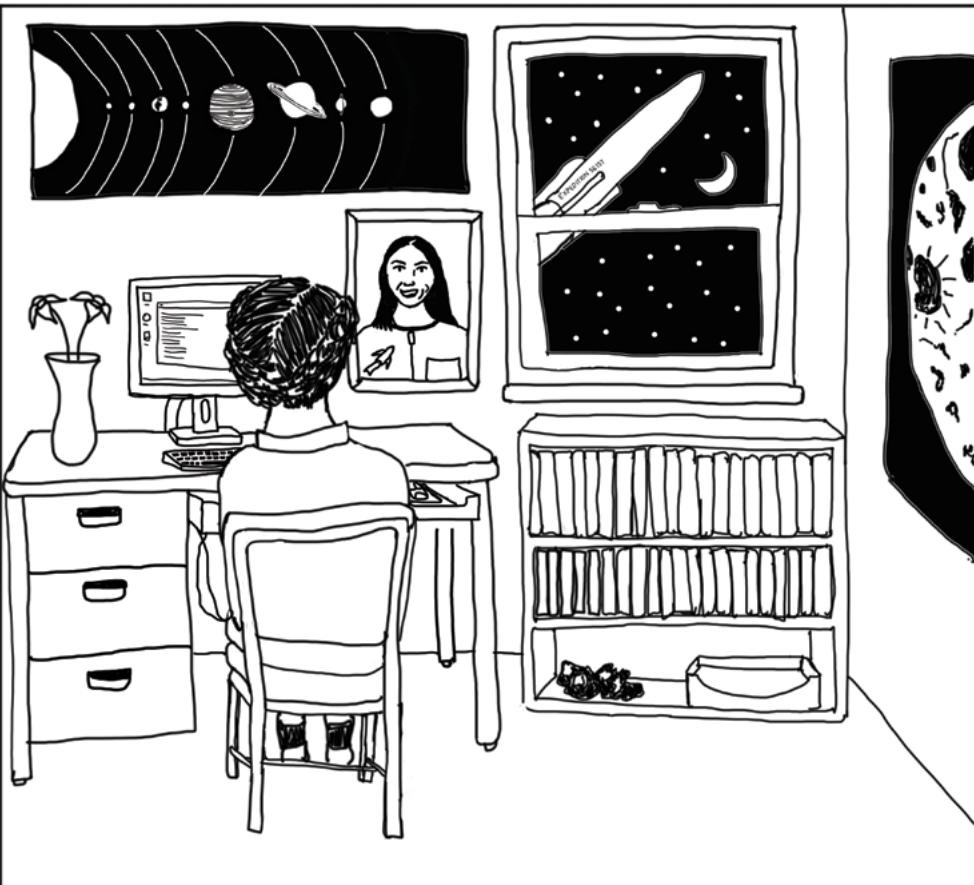
# U N S C R A M B L E

Unscramble some facts about PASEHNITE D. IWLSNO (Stephanie D. Wilson!)

1. NBSTOO – The New England City where she was born \_\_\_\_\_
2. GINEENNGERI CCNEEIS – The subject she received her Bachelor of Science in \_\_\_\_\_
3. VRAARDH – The institution where she received this degree in 1988 \_\_\_\_\_
4. PAERCOSAE IGNENGEIERN – The degree she earned at University of Texas Austin in 1992 \_\_\_\_\_
5. TEHER – The number of space shuttle missions she has been on at NA SA \_\_\_\_\_



# Spot the difference!

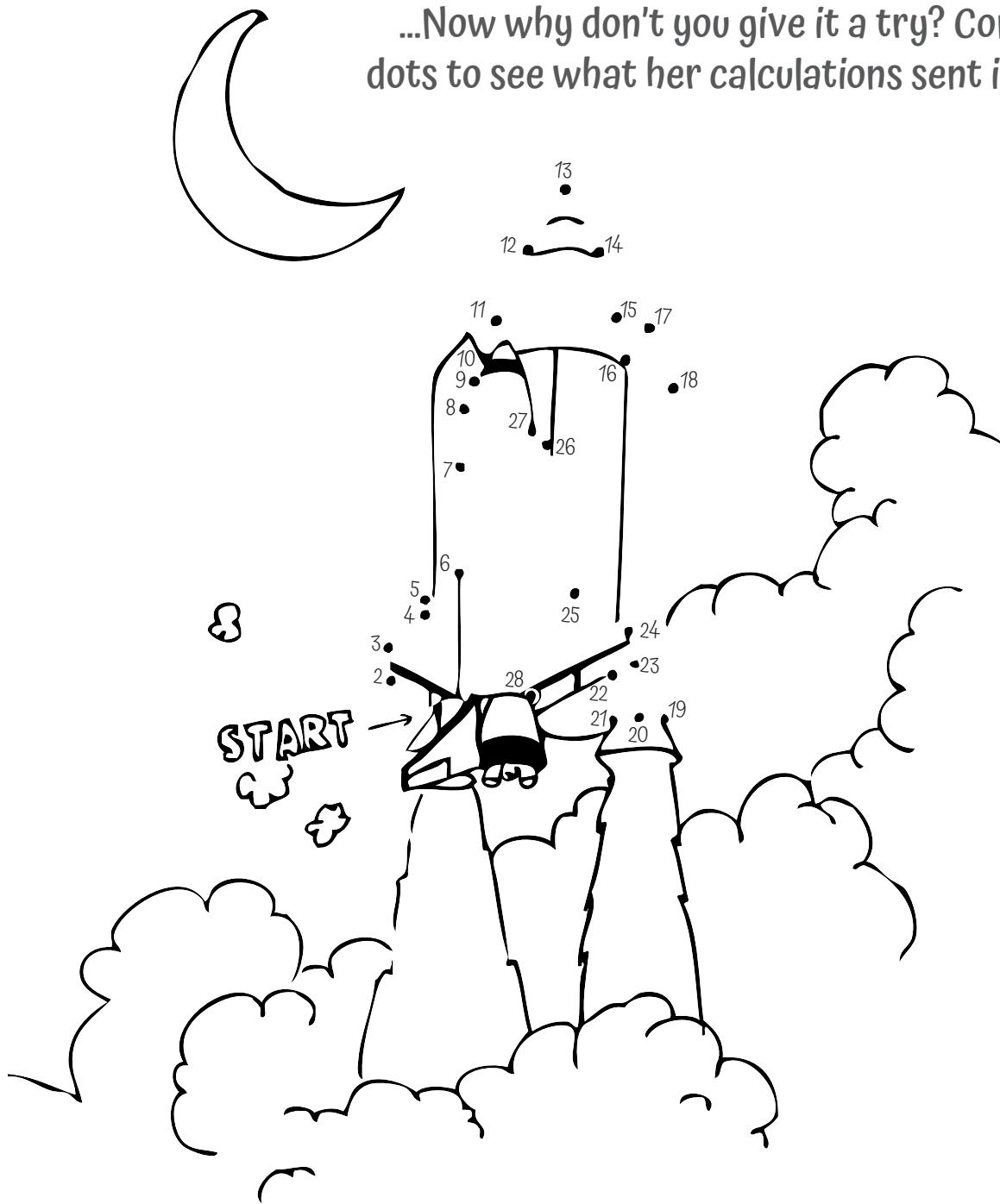


NASA has changed quite a bit since the 1950s.  
Can you find the 11 differences between the  
photos of NASA taken and now? Then, color it in!

10

## Katherine Johnson loved to count...

...Now why don't you give it a try? Connect the dots to see what her calculations sent into orbit!



Katherine Johnson was known as one of NASA's "human computers," and made the extensive calculations for the trajectory for the first American in Space in 1961. She graduated high school at 14 years old and college at 18. Think about how difficult that was for a Black woman in the segregated U.S. of the 1930s!

**"I counted everything. I counted the steps to the road, the steps up to church, the number of dishes and silverware I washed ... anything that could be counted, I did."**

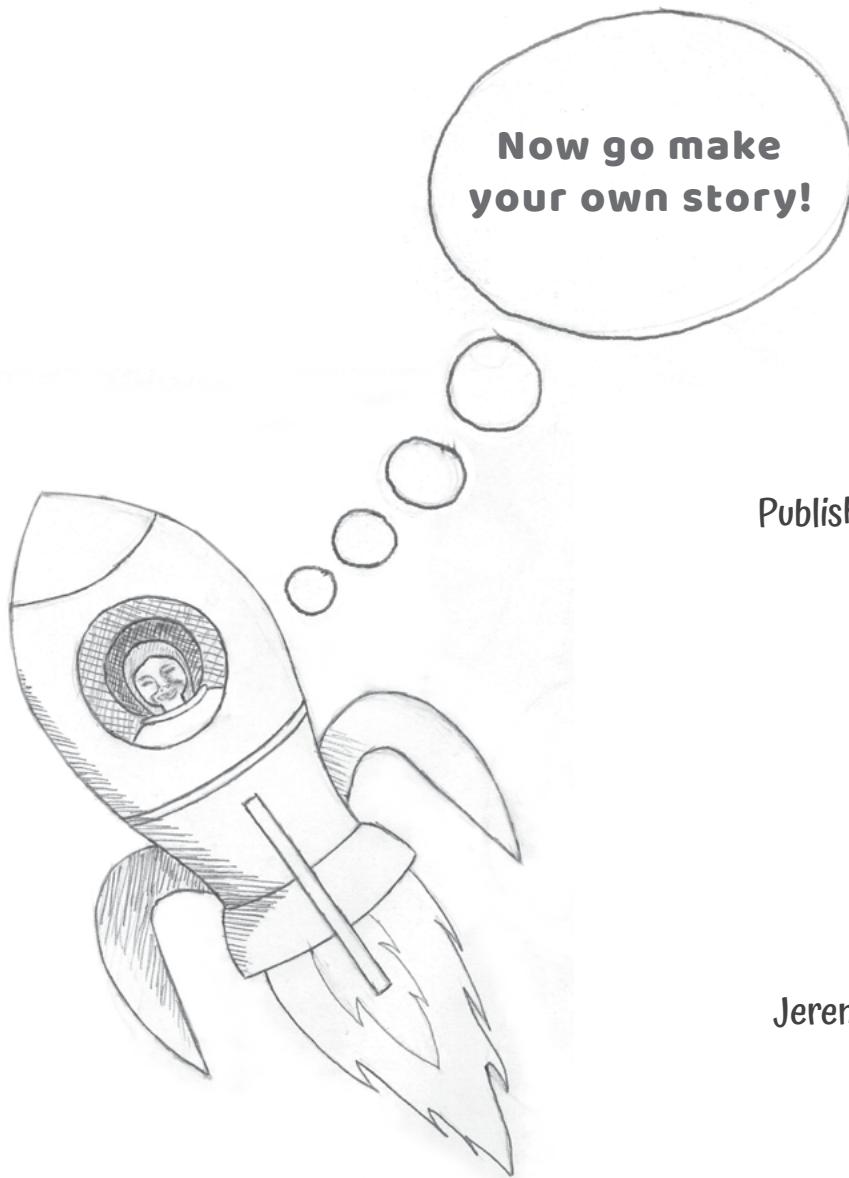
*-Katherine Johnson*

# Now it's your turn!

Give a try retelling the story  
with your own creativity!

Now that you've learned about these four \_\_\_\_\_  
(ADJECTIVE)  
women, what are you thinking? They have persevered  
by \_\_\_\_\_ going where no woman has gone before.  
(ADVERB)  
Johnson, Epps, Jemison, and Wilson are just a few of the  
pioneering \_\_\_\_\_ who set an example for all of  
(PLURAL NOUN)  
us. Through systems of discrimination, they continued to  
work \_\_\_\_\_, to be heard, and to \_\_\_\_\_! Johnson  
(ADVERB)  
\_\_\_\_\_ calculated her way into history. Wilson  
(ADVERB)  
displayed great \_\_\_\_\_ on her 3 flights. Epps  
(NOUN)  
trained hard to be a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ part of her team  
(ADJECTIVE)  
at NASA. And Jemison is a legacy to be the first  
\_\_\_\_\_ American Black woman in space.  
(ADJECTIVE)  
So make sure to give them, and all of the other  
\_\_\_\_\_ women in this world some recognition.  
(ADJECTIVE)

Thank you to the illustrators, [press], Dr. Kesho Scott, and the Black women of NASA who made this book possible.



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by Ariel Lepito

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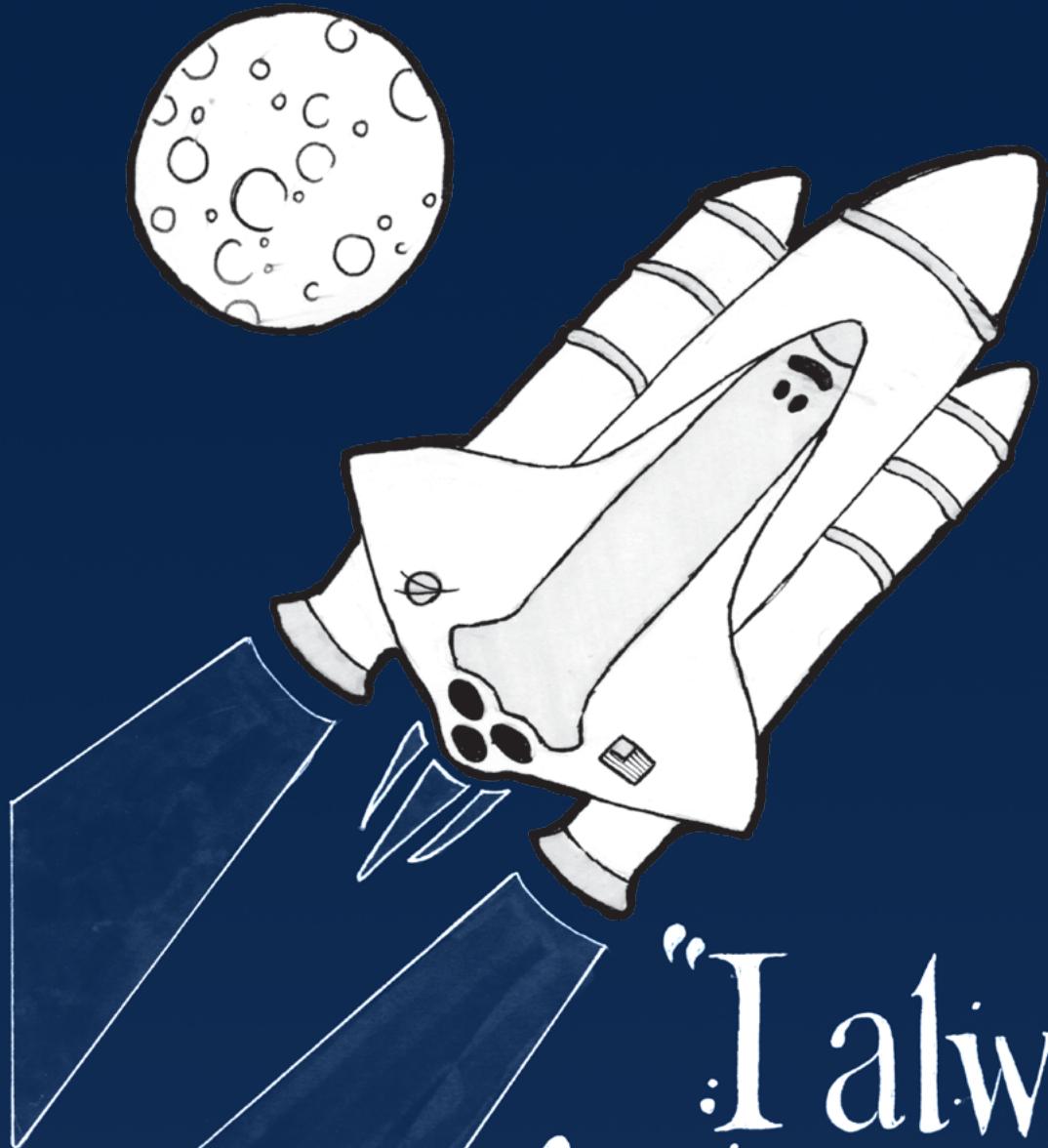
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[press]



"I always  
knew  
I would  
go to space."  
- Mae Jemison