

## ***THE WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION***

***Classroom: Grades 9-12***

***President as Visionary: "Others Ask Why Not?"***

***Activity - Glenn, then Glenn Again: Two Space Missions Compared***

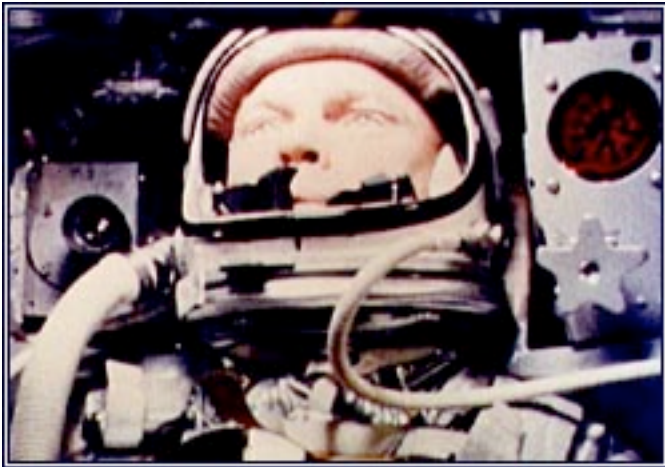
Marine Lt. Col. John Glenn gained status as an American space hero when he made a historic three-orbit flight in Friendship 7 on February 20, 1962. Then, remarkably, at the age of seventy-seven, he made a second flight, this time on the space shuttle Discovery. In this October 1998 undertaking, Glenn took part in an eight-day, 134-orbit mission that traveled 3.6 million miles! In his memoir, John Glenn, he described his feelings as he got ready to board the shuttle.

The elevator took us up. It was a beautiful day, and I paused to glance around at the Cape and the space complex that had changed so much since the time of Project Mercury. As I looked south to the Canaveral lighthouse, the Atlas and Titan launch gantries that are the remaining occupants of Heavy Row were reminders of the early days. Pad 14, where Friendship 7 and the rest of the Project Mercury Atlas flights had launched, was still there, but its gantry had been dismantled long ago. The blockhouse is a museum. It was hard to imagine that virtually the entire history of space travel had occurred between my first ride and my second. Somebody had pointed out that more time had passed between Friendship 7 and this Discovery mission than had passed between Lindbergh's solo transatlantic flight and Friendship 7. It didn't seem that long to me.<sup>9</sup>

***Activity:***

Read as much of Glenn's memoir as possible, but be sure not to skip parts 4 and 6.

Working with another student who has also read those portions, create a scenario in which one of you plays the role of the young John Glenn and the other the older Glenn. Because Glenn's two space missions "bracket" the space age, they allow you the opportunity to show, through two age frames, how the space program has changed, advanced, and become more practical. Use your creativity to establish a dialogue between the older and younger versions of Glenn and to bring out other engaging aspects of his life story.



*John Glenn during flight of Friendship Seven - February 20, 1962*



*At age 77, John Glenn made his second flight into space aboard the space shuttle Discovery*

*An alternative*

After reading *John Glenn: A Memoir*, write a proclamation declaring a John Glenn Appreciation Day in your class or school. Within the text of the proclamation, include as much information as you can about Glenn's contributions to the development of space. Make the proclamation look official and display it in a prominent place.

*Another alternative*

Read at least parts 4 and 6 of Glenn's memoir, and write a one-page description of each of the two flights. Draw detailed diagrams of the two vehicles used for the two flights, showing both interior and exterior views. Explain to your classmates at least ten major differences in the size, sophistication, and purpose of the two vehicles. Display your diagrams, perhaps alongside the proclamation prepared by another student.