

Exercise 8

Read the information. Then read the first part of the passage. Complete the notes. Write NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from the passage for each answer.

Make sure that you only write one or two words in each gap. As a general rule, try to answer with just one word if possible.

The Skylab space station

The USA sent its Skylab space station into orbit in 1973 from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. It wasn't the world's first space station – that had been Salyut 1, which was launched by the Soviet Union on 1 April 1971. However, Salyut travelled alone and empty, controlled remotely back on the Earth. No space station had been manned until Skylab, with its crew of three astronauts. Skylab too launched without its crew, who were transported to the space station once it was in orbit in the Apollo Command / Service Module. The crew members spent up to 84 days aboard Skylab. A limiting factor was pure logistics in terms of how many supplies it was feasible for the crew to bring with them, given the restricted space available while in transit on the Apollo Command / Service Module.

Key objectives of the Skylab mission included the study of space and an investigation into how people could live and work there for extended periods. Additionally, the astronauts were to examine the Earth's surface (both land and oceans). However, the primary goal of the mission was solar research. In fact, solar science was significantly advanced by the powerful telescope on board, and the telescope's observation of the sun was unprecedented. The astronauts had an intense programme of experiments to carry out, and the data from these was scrutinised following Skylab's return to Earth.

The life cycle of Skylab began after a period of massive expenditure on space rockets, moon capsules and service modules, many of which were still in serviceable condition on return to Earth, and so the decision was taken to reuse leftover components from these to forge the space station. Many of these were from the Apollo moon missions. For example, the Orbital Workshop (the thickest end of the space station) was made from two tanks that had been used for storing liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen; the former was reconfigured to become a living and working facility, and the latter was used for storing waste products that had accumulated on the mission – unlike in other spacecraft, these were not recycled or dumped into space.

- Time spent by astronauts in orbit depended on the availability of _____ on Skylab.
- The main purpose of Skylab was to study the _____.
- Skylab was constructed from _____ pieces of hardware.
- In the Orbital Workshop, _____ were kept in an old oxygen tank.