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SPACE TECH SERIES

Robert H. Goddard

Father of Modern Rocketry

The Rocket That Changed the World

Robert H. Goddard was an American scientist who dreamed of building a **rocket** that could fly very high. As a boy, he read stories about space travel and imagined machines that could leave the Earth. He decided to make that dream real.

On March 16, 1926, in Auburn, Massachusetts, Goddard launched the world's first rocket powered by **liquid fuel**. The little rocket rose about 41 feet into the air and landed 184 feet away. It flew for only about 2.5 seconds, but it proved that rockets powered by liquid fuel could work.

Goddard kept building and improving his rockets until he died in 1945. He earned 214 **patents** for his inventions. Today he is called the "Father of Modern Rocketry." NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center is named in his honor, and the rockets that carry people to space use ideas he first tested.

SPACE WORDS TO KNOW

- **rocket:** A machine that pushes itself forward by shooting out hot gas from burning fuel.
- **liquid fuel:** Fuel in a liquid form, like a special kind of gasoline, that a rocket burns to go up.
- **patent:** A special paper from the government that says you were the first to invent something.

Part 1 • Reading Comprehension

1. What did Goddard launch on March 16, 1926?

2. In what state did the first flight happen?

3. How high did the first rocket fly?

4. Why is Goddard called the "Father of Modern Rocketry"?

Rocket Flight Math

On March 16, 1926, Goddard's rocket rose about 41 feet into the air, landed 184 feet away, and flew for about 2.5 seconds. Goddard kept working on rockets until 1945.

1 How many more feet did the rocket go away (184 feet) than up (41 feet)? Subtract.

2 The rocket flew for about 2.5 seconds. How many seconds would 2 flights like this last?
($2.5 + 2.5$)

3 How many years passed from 1926 to 1945? Subtract.

Part 3 • Think About It

Goddard's first rocket only flew for about 2.5 seconds. Why do you think that short flight was still a very big deal?

