

Rocket Like Mae Jemison

Rocket like Mae Jemison by crafting a paper rocket! Learn about Mae Jemison with a book or worksheet, and then have your child create a paper rocket with their picture inside. Help them imagine reaching for the stars, just like Mae, in their very own rocket. Perfect for young learners in preschool through second grade, this activity highlights both math and non-fiction comprehension skills.

Mae Jemison was the first African American woman to enter space. She is a doctor, researcher, and dancer. After becoming a doctor, she joined the Peace Corps and served in Africa. Later, she joined NASA and became a crew member of the space shuttle *Endeavour*. After her travels in space, she left NASA to start companies and continue researching how to get to a new star.

What You Need:

- Picture of your child with their face cut out
- Assortment of construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Scrap paper for notes about what your child says
- Tape (optional)
- [Pictures](#) of Mae Jemison in space
- [Video](#) of an astronaut floating in space
- Book about Mae Jemison, like [Ready-to-Read - You Should Meet: You Should Meet Mae Jemison](#) or [Astronaut Mae Jemison](#) (optional)
- [Who Is Mae Jemison?](#) worksheet (optional)

What You Do:

1. Ask your child to share things they know about space. Feel free to jot down some notes based on what they say.
2. Read a book to your child about Mae Jemison, or use the worksheet Who Is Mae Jemison? for ideas. Discuss the questions in the worksheet with your child.
3. Ask your child what they think it would be like to travel to space. Show them [pictures](#) of Mae in space and pictures of space itself. They can also see a [video](#) of an astronaut floating in space.
4. Ask your child to point out things they notice about space so far. Feel free to jot down some notes based on what they say.
5. Explain to your child that Mae Jemison is trying to figure out how to go to a new solar system. Tell them that solar systems are filled with planets that orbit, or travel around, a star.
6. Tell your child to imagine Mae Jemison was successful finding out how to get to another star and they are an astronaut on the rocket traveling to that star. Have your child create a paper rocket ship. They can cut:
 - a long rectangle for the body of the ship
 - a triangle for the top of the ship
 - little circles or squares for the windows
 - two rhombuses for the fins at the bottom of the rocket
 - wavy flames for the exhaust
7. Have your child glue all the pieces of the rocket as seen in the picture.
8. Ask your child to cut out their face from the picture to add to one of the windows of the rocket. If they want to bring family along with them, have them add more people to each window.
9. Finish the activity by asking what your child wonders about space. Write some notes about their thoughts to guide future activities and read-aloud books.

An extension for this activity is to create a rocket that can soar in the air and then discuss the distance the rocket travels. The ideas for scientific extension are endless!

