

Space station astronauts to teach Christa McAuliffe's science lessons

By Associated Press, adapted by Newsela staff on 01.29.18

Word Count **581**

Level **880L**



In this September 13, 1985, photo, Christa McAuliffe tries out the commander's seat on the flight deck of a shuttle simulator at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. Thirty-two years after she and the six other other crew members died in the Challenger disaster, a pair of teachers-turned-astronauts on the International Space Station will pay tribute to McAuliffe by carrying out her science classes. Photo by: AP Photo

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida — High school teacher and astronaut Christa McAuliffe will be honored in a special way this year. Lessons she had created 32 years ago will finally be taught in space.

As NASA's — the U.S. space agency — first official teacher in space, McAuliffe was going to run experiments for schoolchildren. She never made it to orbit. She and six crew members were killed during liftoff of the space shuttle Challenger on January 28, 1986.

Science Classes Will Be Taught On Space Station

Thirty-two years after the Challenger disaster her science classes will be taught on the International Space Station. Two astronauts who used to be teachers will be leading them.

Astronauts Joe Acaba and Ricky Arnold will perform some of McAuliffe's lessons over the next several months. Acaba shared the news on January 19. He was doing a video call with students at her old school, Framingham State University near Boston, Massachusetts. Acaba is currently on the International Space Station.

"I can't think of a better time or a better place to make this announcement," Acaba said. He and Arnold "look forward to helping to inspire the next generation of explorers and educators."

Acaba and two other astronauts then answered questions from Framingham State students about life in space.

Bringing "Christa's Lessons To Life"

Four lessons will be filmed by Acaba and Arnold, then posted online by the Challenger Center. The Challenger Center is an organization that helps support math and science education. The McAuliffe lessons will be on bubbles, how things move, separating mixtures and liquids.

The center's president, Lance Bush, said he is thrilled "to bring Christa's lessons to life." He added that they felt honored to share McAuliffe's lessons.

"We are honored to have the opportunity to complete Christa's lessons and share them with students and teachers around the world," Bush said.

Mike Kincaid helps run NASA's education department. He said the lessons are "an incredible way to honor and remember" McAuliffe. As well as the entire Challenger crew who died.

Space Lessons Will Be Posted Online

McAuliffe had planned to videotape six lessons during her space flight. Four will be done by Acaba and Arnold. A few will be changed to take advantage of the equipment at the space station.

The lessons will be online this spring.

Acaba returns to Earth at the end of February. Arnold flies up in March. NASA is calling their back-to-back missions, "A Year of Education on Station."

Teachers Turned Astronauts

The two men were teaching on opposite sides of the world when they were picked to be educator-astronauts. Acaba taught in Florida, while Arnold taught in Romania. They joined NASA in 2004.

McAuliffe was teaching history, law and economics at Concord High School in New Hampshire. She was the number one pick for NASA's teacher in space project in 1985.

Her backup, Barbara Morgan, helps run the Challenger Center. Morgan was NASA's first educator-astronaut. She flew on the shuttle Endeavour in 2007 and helped build the space station.

Space Station Astronaut Notes Experiences In Journal

McAuliffe planned to keep a journal during her space shuttle mission. One college student asked if the astronauts were doing the same. Acaba said he writes journal entries each night on the space station. He has kept a leather-bound journal during his 14 years as an astronaut.

"When I'm sitting on my porch sometime in the future, I'll look back on all these great times," Acaba said.

Quiz

1 Read the section "Science Classes Will Be Taught On Space Station."

Which sentence from the section shows WHY two astronauts want to teach some of the lessons that Christa McAuliffe created 32 years ago?

- (A) Thirty-two years after the Challenger disaster her science classes will be taught on the International Space Station.
- (B) Astronauts Joe Acaba and Ricky Arnold will perform some of McAuliffe's lessons over the next several months.
- (C) He and Arnold "look forward to helping to inspire the next generation of explorers and educators."
- (D) Acaba and two other astronauts then answered questions from Framingham State students about life in space.

2 Read the section "Space Lessons Will Be Posted Online."

Which sentence from the section BEST supports the idea that Acaba and Arnold will include some new ideas of their own in the McAuliffe lessons they plan to teach on their missions in space?

- (A) McAuliffe had planned to videotape six lessons during her space flight.
- (B) Four will be done by Acaba and Arnold.
- (C) A few will be changed to take advantage of the equipment at the space station.
- (D) NASA is calling their back-to-back missions "A Year of Education on Station."

3 If this article were organized using a chronological structure, which sentence would come FIRST?

- (A) High school teacher and astronaut Christa McAuliffe will be honored in a special way this year.
- (B) McAuliffe was teaching history, law and economics at Concord High School in New Hampshire.
- (C) The center's president, Lance Bush, said he is thrilled "to bring Christa's lessons to life."
- (D) The two men were teaching on opposite sides of the world when they were picked to be educator-astronauts.

4 Read the paragraph from the section "Space Station Astronaut Notes Experiences In Journal."

McAuliffe planned to keep a journal during her space shuttle mission. One college student asked if the astronauts were doing the same. Acaba said he writes journal entries each night on the space station. He has kept a leather-bound journal during his 14 years as an astronaut.

Which answer choice BEST describes the structure of this paragraph?

- (A) comparison
- (B) cause and effect
- (C) chronology
- (D) problem and solution