

Sample Process Paper – 7th Grade Student

I decided to research artificial satellites after I read *Rocket Boys* by Homer Hickam for a school project. I initially was interested in communication satellites, but after some research I decided that an accurate project would have to include all aspects of artificial satellites in order to tell a complete story. The innovation of an artificial satellites required scientists to use military rockets to launch the sphere into orbit. The first satellite, Sputnik, created a powerful impact worldwide. Through my research I discovered that the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union created a competitive environment, and that Americans worried that the United States was losing this war. The immediate response to Sputnik created an environment that led to significant changes in the areas of military, education, and science.

I started my research by accessing articles and documents at Sonoma State University and UC Berkeley. My best secondary source was *Sputnik: Shock of the Century*. I also found useful documents in the digitized collections of the Eisenhower and Kennedy Presidential Libraries where I found declassified documents that were helpful in understanding how decisions were made. I listened to speeches and watched videos on the History Channel, CSPAN and NPR. NASA and the National Air and Space Museum both have good online exhibits that I used in my research.

Interviews provided me with information about satellites, their history, and their use today. I interviewed engineers at NASA'S Jet Propulsion Laboratory. My best primary source was an interview with Dr. Casani who has been with JPL for over 50 years. I also interviewed authors, the curator of the Air and Space Museum, and Susan Eisenhower.

I balanced my research in two ways. For balance with Cold War politics, I listened to interviews with Sergei Khrushchev about Communism, his father, and the Soviet space program. I also read about the secrecy of the Soviet space program in Korolev's biography. I sought out both sides of President Eisenhower's role by reading declassified documents, books, and by interviewing his granddaughter. This balanced research led me to realize that Eisenhower's commitment to his secret Corona program led to a misperception about his leadership. I organized my documentary around Eisenhower's actions.

I decided to create a documentary for my project because I had access to primary video and photos. I used Final Cut Studio to edit my video. I used photos, video clips, and clips from my interviews in my documentary.

The innovation of artificial satellites caught the attention of the world in 1957. The launch of Sputnik started the Space Race. In the United States, Americans met the challenge by putting more emphasis on science and technology. Today, artificial satellites are an integral part of the military, the way we communicate, and the way we learn about earth and the universe. The introduction of artificial satellites put intellectual achievement ahead of weapons and wealth as national goals.