



# Teacher Resource Guide



# One Giant Leap

by Ben Gartner

*I'm pretty sure I'm about to die in space. And I just turned twelve and a half.*

Blast off with the four winners of the StellarKid Project on a trip to the International Space Station (ISS) and then to the Gateway outpost orbiting the Moon! It's a dream come true until space junk collides with the ISS, turning their epic trip into a nightmare of survival. Alone aboard the *Aether* starship, the kids have to work as a team to save the adults before the ISS is destroyed. Suit up, cadet, and launch into adventure with **One Giant Leap**!

**Note for Teachers/Parents:** The information below is designed to help provide background for students as they read **One Giant Leap** and be a starting point for discussions.

**Ben Gartner** is the award-winning author of adventure books for middle graders. His stories take readers for a thrilling ride, maybe even teaching them something on the journey. Ben can be found living and writing near the mountains with his wife and two boys.

**Other books by Ben include:**

*The Eye of Ra*  
*Sol Invictus* (The Eye of Ra book 2)  
*People of the Sun* (The Eye of Ra book 3)

## First Line Predictions

*I'm pretty sure I'm about to die in space.  
And I just turned twelve and a half.*

Before you begin reading the book, think about the first line of the book. What can you learn about the story from this sentence? What predictions can you make about what will happen in the story? What questions do you have about the story after reading the first line?

## Common Core

(list of standards covered in this guide)

### 4th Grade

ELA RL 4.1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10;  
W 4.1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

### 5th Grade

ELA RL 5.1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10;  
W 5.1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

### 6th Grade

ELA RL 6.1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10;  
W 6.1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

### 7th Grade

ELA RL 7. 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10;  
W 7.1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

*One Giant Leap* is a story about coming to terms with truths you may not want to face, and that sharing your feelings with a trusted friend about those things can make them more manageable. It is also a story of bravery, courage, and pursuing your dreams, even when the odds are stacked against you. As you read, think about how the story relates to other books you've read, events in your own life, and real life world events.

### Text-to-Text Connections

Have students brainstorm other books they have read with similar themes. How are they similar? How are they different?

### Text-to-Self Connections

Have students think about their dreams. How have they pursued their dreams?

### Text-to-World Connections

Have students brainstorm events and people they have heard about related to space exploration. How are the people and events in *One Giant Leap* similar, and how are they different?



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## Reading Response Questions

A few ideas for incorporating these questions into your reading of **One Giant Leap...**

- Have students keep a journal and answer questions as they read.
- Utilize Think-Pair-Share and discuss these questions throughout the reading.
- Select a couple of questions for students to write a longer written response. This is an opportunity to cite evidence in their writing to support their answers.

There are several chapters that end in cliffhangers, so this is a great time to pause at the end of chapters and ask, "What do you think will happen next?"

Note: Some questions are meant to be asked before reading the chapter (making predictions), some are meant for while reading the chapter, and some are meant for after reading the chapter. It may be helpful to read through the chapter ahead of time to give you a sense of when to ask the questions in each chapter.

## Chapters 1-12

What problems is the narrator facing in the opening chapter of the book? (Ch 1)

Why was Fin chosen for the StellarKid Project? (Ch 2)

Who does Fin want to bring with him to space? (Ch 3)

Fin's dad isn't so sure this is the right time to go to space, but Fin argues that it is the right time. What are his arguments, and do you agree or disagree? (Ch 4)

What is Fin's recurring nightmare? Why do you think he has this nightmare over and over? (Ch 5)

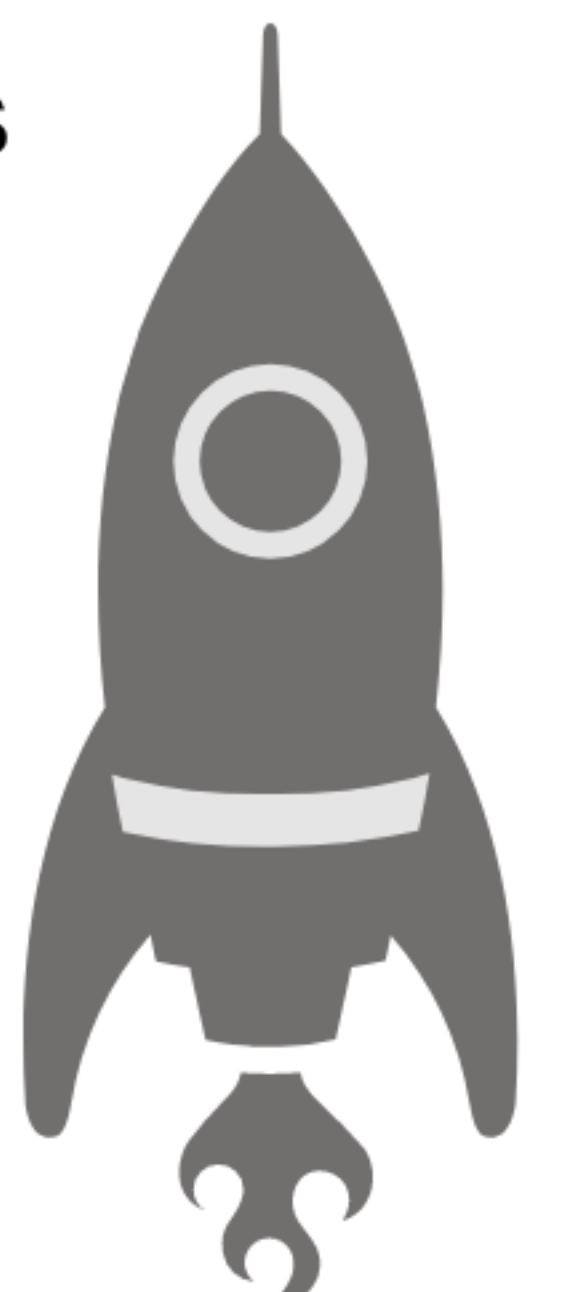
What words would you use to describe how Fin was probably feeling when he saw the prototype SAFER? (Ch 7)

What happened to David while he was on the centrifuge? (Ch 8)

What news does Mr. Deuce deliver to the team when the team is working on Kalpana's software? (Ch 10)

Who do you think is tampering with the equipment at JSC? Why do you think they are tampering with the equipment? (Ch 12)

How does Commander Horowitz convince Dr. Gould that the children should be allowed to go to space? (Ch 12)





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## Chapters 13-37

What tradition do they follow before boarding the *Aether*? (Ch 13)

What potential problems will they be facing while in space? (Ch 15)

How do you think Fin can feel both excited and homesick about being away from home? (Ch 16)

While touring the ISS, what update did they receive on OCM5? (Ch 18)

Summarize a list of problems facing the ISS and *Aether* after the storm. (Ch 21)

How did Mae's skills come in handy after they disconnected from the ISS? (Ch 23)

What plan do the kids come up with to rescue the remaining adults on the ISS? (Ch 26)

"Feels oddly freeing to be trapped out here in space where no one can hear me scream." (195) - Being free and trapped seem to be opposites. How do you think it can feel freeing to be trapped?

What do we learn about Fin's mom while he's tumbling around in space? (Ch 28)

What surprises did Kal install on SAFER before Fin's mission to rescue the adults? (Ch 28)

Why are the five remaining space suits enough to return to *Aether*? (Ch 29)

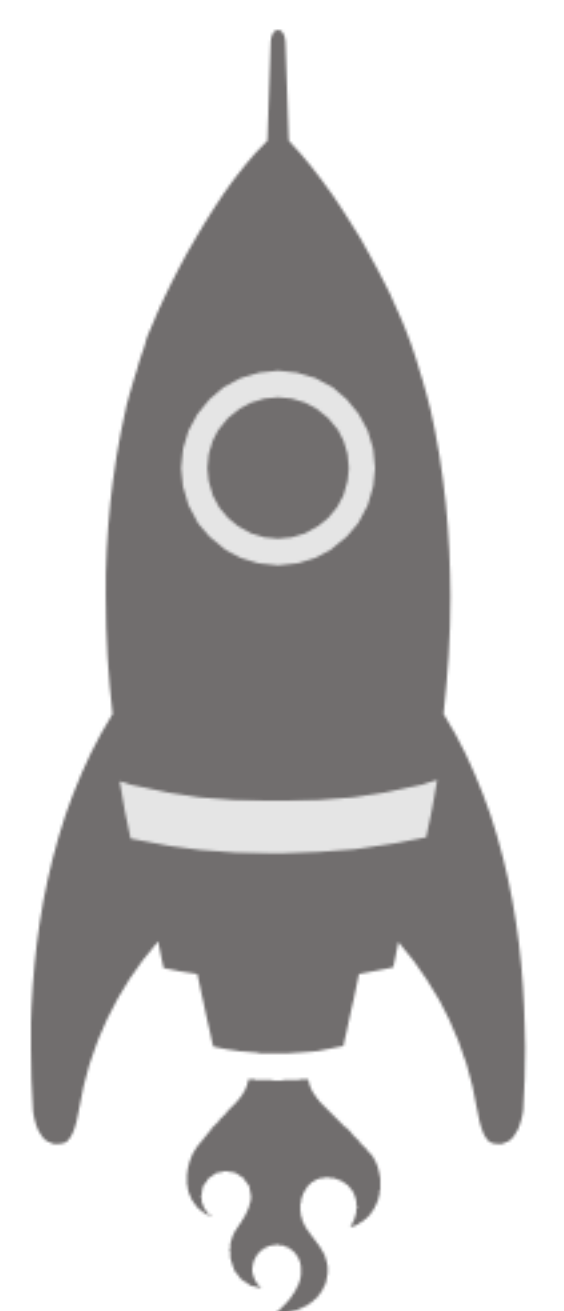
When Fin and the others are traveling back to *Aether*, what prevents them from reaching the *Aether*? (Ch 30)

What did the *Aether* and her crew ask Houston for permission to do? (Ch 32)

As they are traveling to the moon, what do they realize Fin is suffering from? (Ch 33)

"These astronauts are human, sure, but a different breed than the average person." (248 - ch 34) - How do you think astronauts are a different breed than the average person? Why do you think that might be a benefit?

How do you think each of the kids opening up about their situation helps them? (Ch 36)





# Similes

Similes compare two things using **like** or **as**. Authors use similes to help readers create a picture in their mind of what is happening in the story. How many similes can you find in *One Giant Leap*? Try writing three similes of your own to describe Fin's time in space.

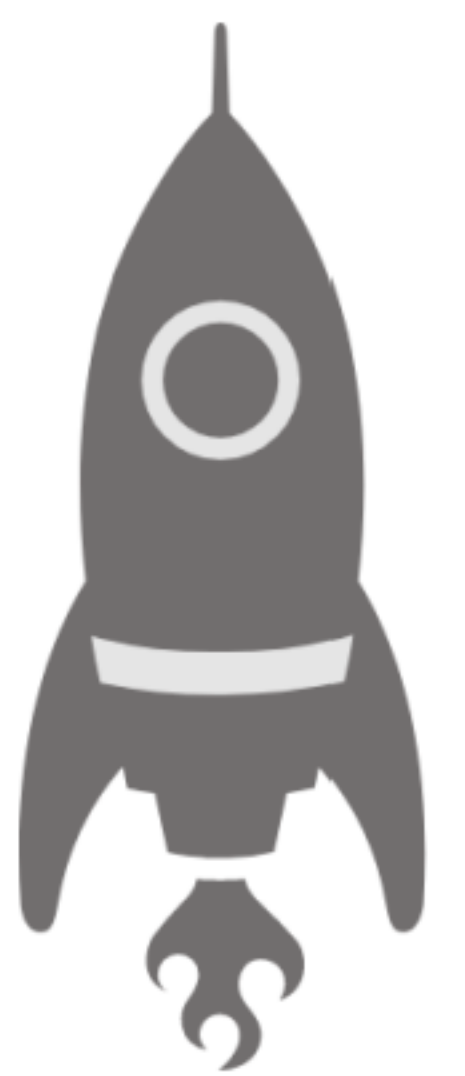
One Giant Leap  
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# Research

**One Giant Leap** mentions lots of interesting people, places, and things. Choose one of the following and research more about the topic. Then, share your information with someone else.

International Space Station  
Space shuttles  
Apollo program  
Artemis missions

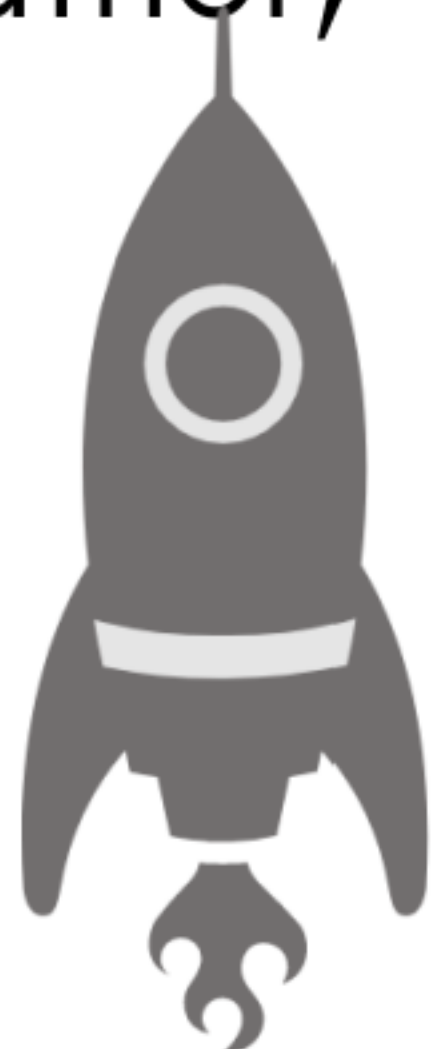
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# Mission Patch

Design your own mission to space and then a mission patch to go with it. Be as creative as you'd like with the symbolism you'd like to include on your patch. If you need some inspiration, you can do some research on real life mission patches. Email your finished design to Ben Gartner, the author, at [ben@bengartner.com](mailto:ben@bengartner.com)

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# Go Live!

Create a vlog series as if you were a journalist back on earth reporting on what is happening in space. Get creative with how you would share significant events in their journey.

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**Note for Teachers/Parents:** Students can choose one or more of these activities related to **One Giant Leap**.



Dear Journal,

# *One Giant Leap*

by Ben Gartner

The time Fin spends training for their mission to space is filled with highs and lows. While you read the chapters set at the training center, use this space to keep a journal as if you were Fin. Think about not only what happened, but how Fin might have felt or the questions he might have wanted to ask.

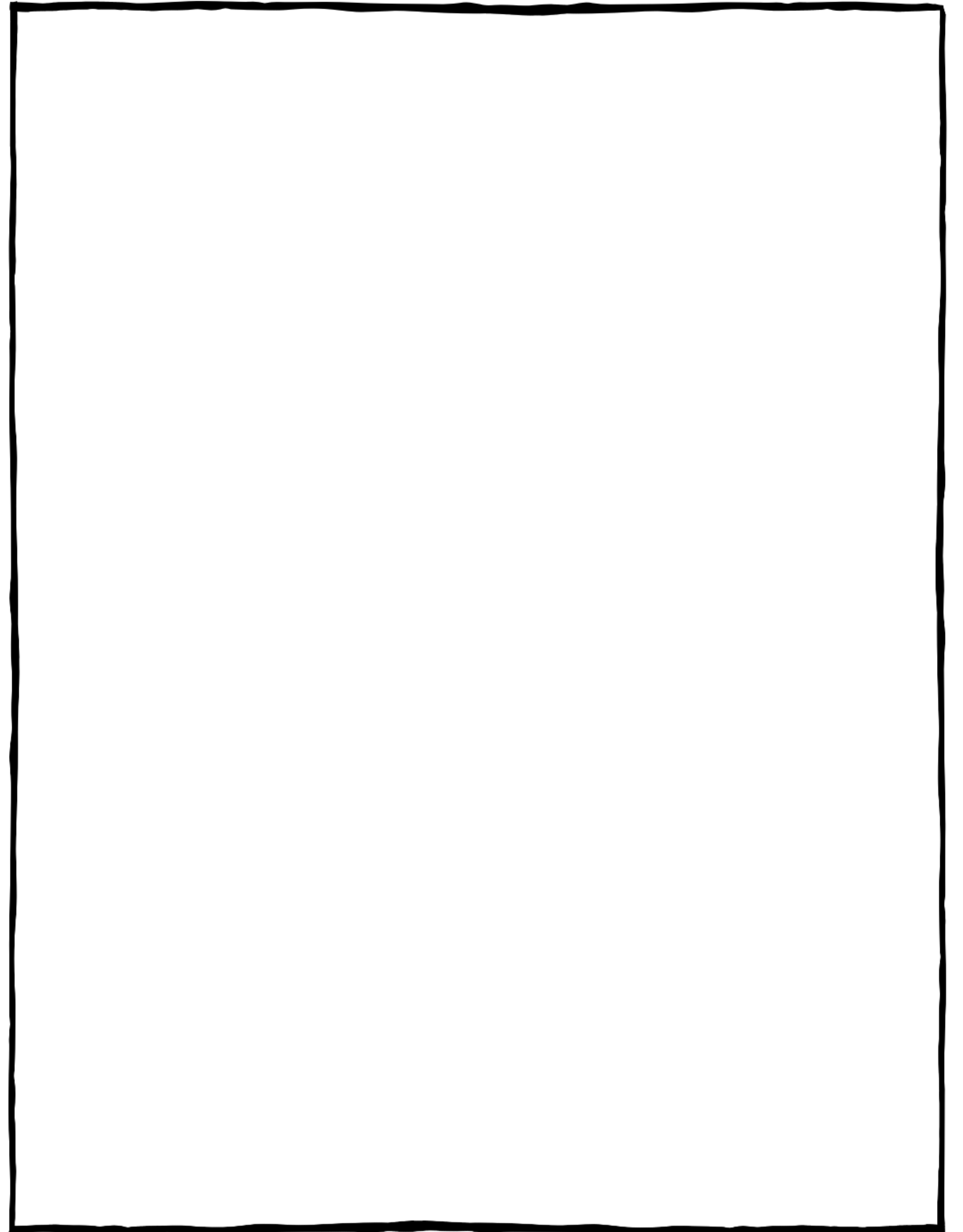
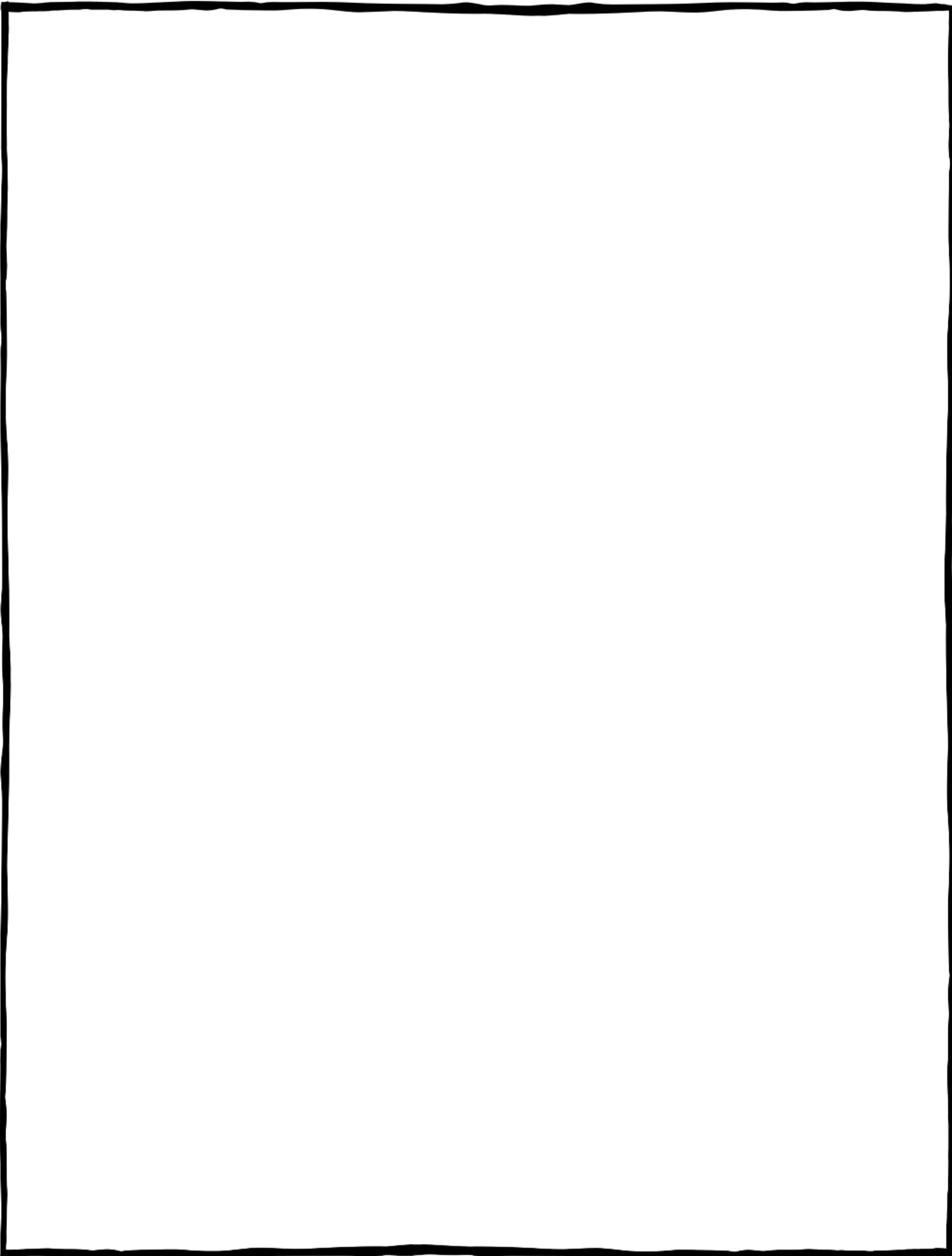
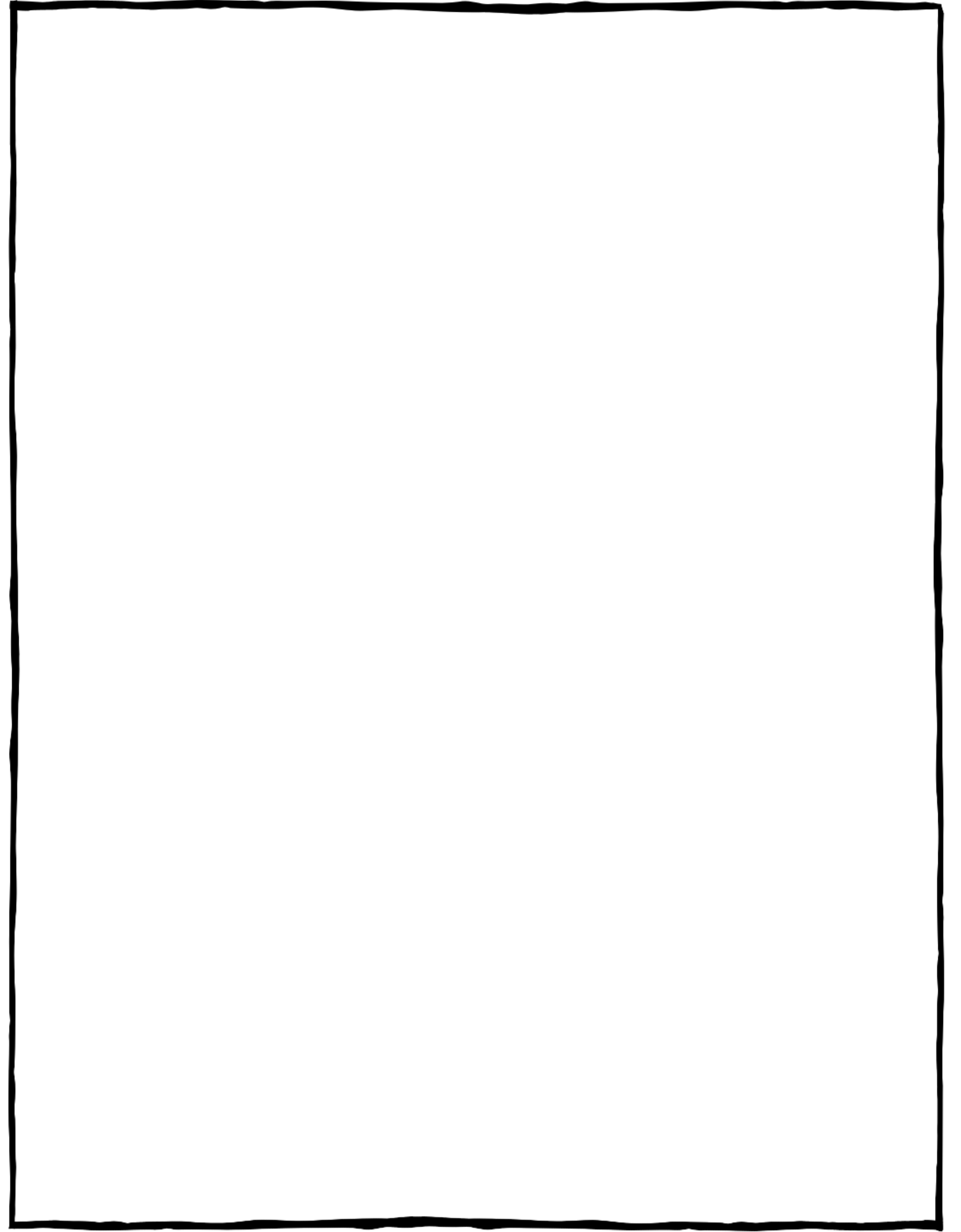
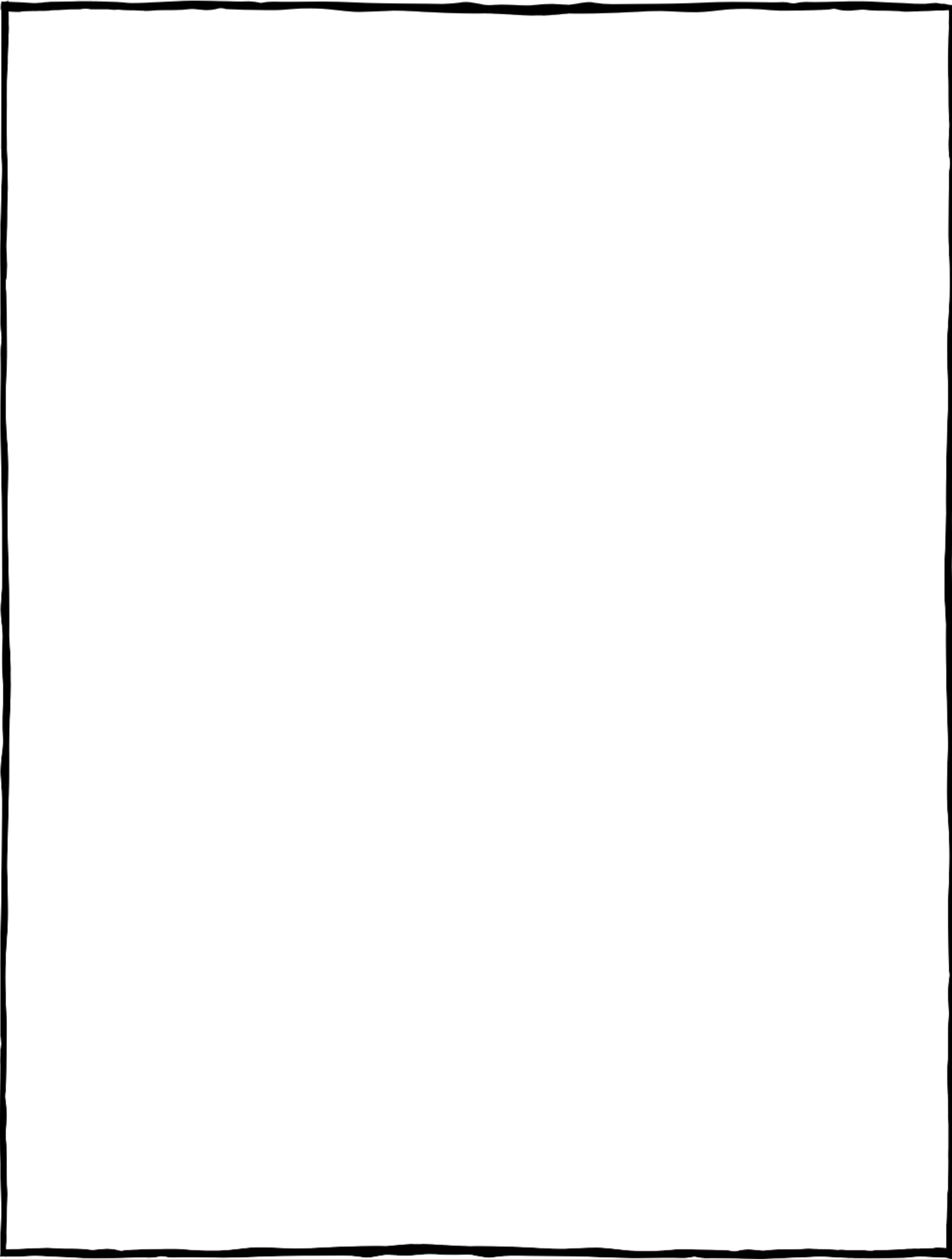
Dear Journal,

Dear Journal,



# Visualize It

Create a graphic novel retelling the story. Print additional pages as necessary to tell the whole story.





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Fin dreamed of traveling to the Moon, and during *One Giant Leap*, his dream came true. Would you want to go to the Moon? Why or why not? Do you think kids should be allowed to travel to the Moon?

In the space below, write a persuasive essay about whether or not kids should be allowed to go to space. Be sure to defend your position with at least three reasons.

[illegible]

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



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In Chapter 18, the kids get a tour of the International Space Station (ISS). Use the space below to draw and label the ISS using the information from the tour. When you are finished with your drawing, you can look back at the diagram at the beginning of the book and/or do some additional research on the ISS to add more details to your drawing.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



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Automated mail-fetching device. StellarKid Project inventions. There are a number of inventions in *One Giant Leap*, and now it's YOUR turn! First, spend some time brainstorming what you might like to invent. Then use the space below to sketch out the details of your invention. Then it's time to take action and turn your sketch into a real life invention. Put together a list of supplies you'll need to create a prototype and then test out your invention!

My Brainstorms

My Sketch

My Supplies

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



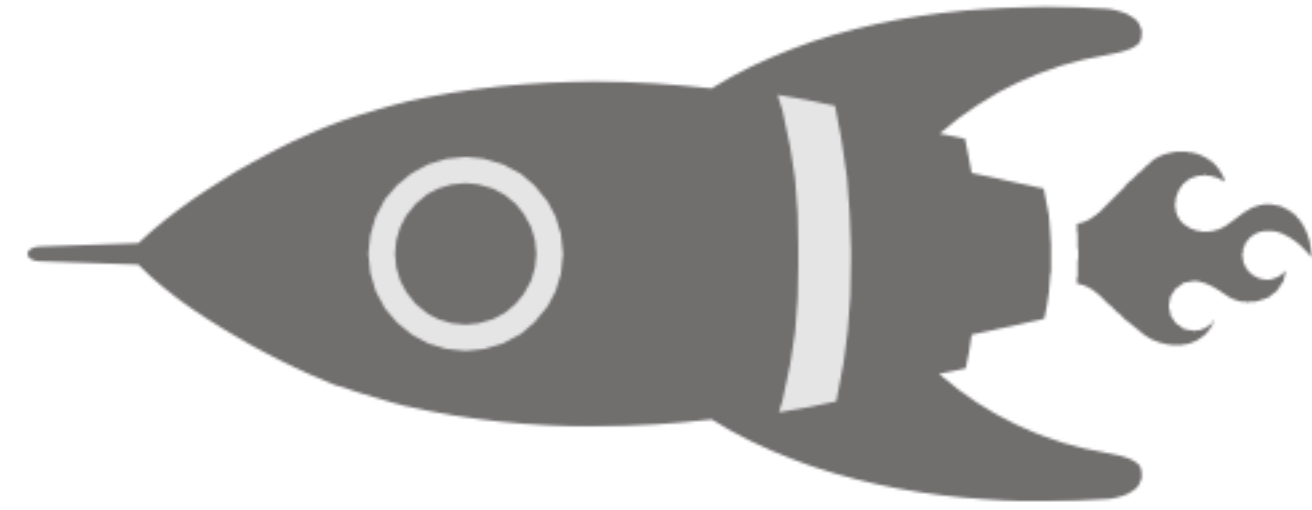
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## Vocabulary Bookmark

**One Giant Leap** may contain words that are new for you. While you are reading, use context clues to investigate the meanings of these words. Use this list as a bookmark and write down other new words you find on the back.

Cattywampus  
Centrifuge  
Detrimental  
Flummoxed  
Frayed  
Gangly  
Inquisitive  
Invincible  
Malfeasance  
Menacing  
Outlandish  
Quagmire  
Reliant  
Turbulent  
Vertigo



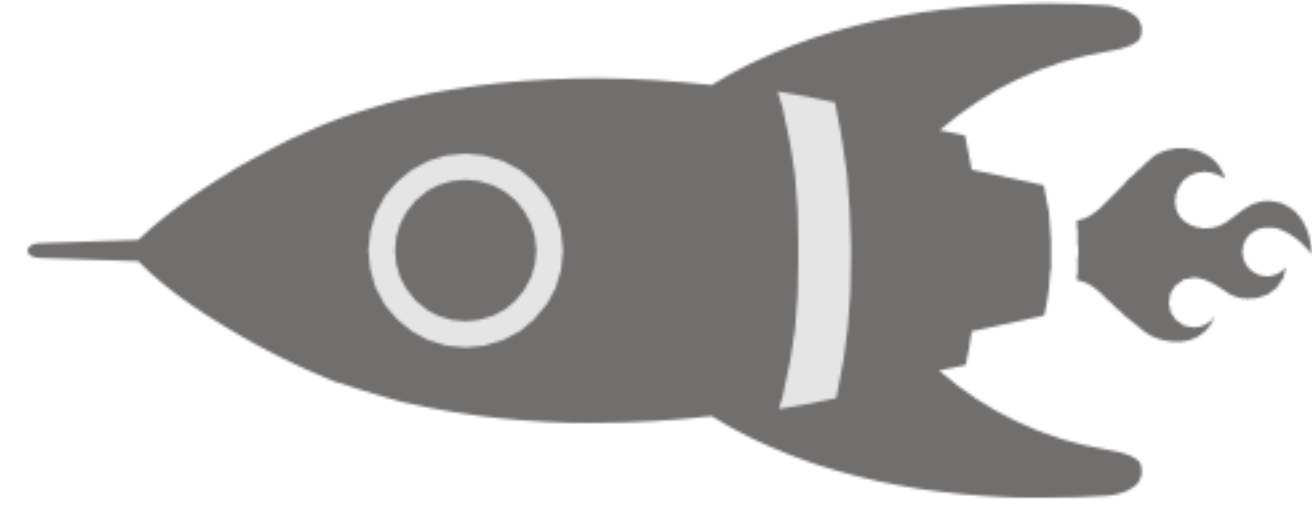
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