



## Aviation & Champagne in the savanna

In France, on the 19th Sept, 1783 the Montgolfier brothers successfully launched their first load carrying hot air balloon balloon made of paper and cloth. To inflate the craft they burned a combination of straw, chopped wool and dried horse manure underneath the balloon. As the straw burned it released heat that helped the balloon float. The wool and manure made lots of smoke and helped keep the burning flame low, which lessened the risk of setting the balloon alight.

## The First Crew: Sheep, Duck and Rooster

The brothers were too nervous to try out their invention themselves so they sent a sheep, a duck and a rooster to see what would happen. The balloon floated up into the sky and landed safely eight minutes later.

Once the Montgolfier brothers realised what they had achieved they approached the King of France to see if he would view their invention, with two people on board instead of farm yard animals. King Louis XVI agreed.



## The first balloon pilots were criminals

Louis XVI of France ordered the first manned balloon flight. Because he feared that the pilots could die in this untested means of flight, he chose two people who were destined to die anyway, Jean-Francois Pilate De Rozier and Francois Laurent d'Arlandes who were criminals sentenced to death.



## The word 'pilot'...

... is derived from 'Pilatre', the name of the first person to command an aerial vehicle.

