



3. Usually, NASA builds telescopes, then names them, after consulting with astronauts (and, sometimes, the public). But James Webb telescope was named by the director of NASA in 2002, before it was built. Now, a group of astronomers is petitioning NASA to change its name, to honour Harriet Tubman instead. First, **read** about each person.



**Harriet Tubman** was born into slavery in 1822. She escaped, only to return to danger at least 13 times to help other slaves escape. During the American Civil War—when the slave-holding South was fighting the North—Tubman was a spy for the North (which wanted to ban slavery for the whole country). After the war, she fought for women's right to vote. During her time helping slaves escape north, she used the stars in the night sky to navigate towards freedom.



**James Webb** led NASA from 1961 to 1968, during America's space race with the Soviet Union (a group of countries led by Russia). The US was considered to be the winner of the race after their 1969 moon landing. Before NASA, Webb had worked at the US State Department, at a time when the US government was firing employees whose lifestyle or political beliefs they thought were a threat during the Cold War. (The government has since apologised for these actions.) Experts disagree on how involved Webb was in these firings.

Do you think the telescope should be renamed? Explain why or why not.

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4. Explain what kind of people you think become astronomers, and why you think that.

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