## AWESOME stories

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## THE LAST WORDS



In this NASA photo we see Flight Directors Jay Greene (in the foreground) and Lee Briscoe in the aftermath of the explosion. Their faces reflect the emotions they are feeling when they realize the mission, and the *Challenger's* crew, are lost.

Months later, NASA released a transcript of the last words recorded by *Challenger's* crew. At 73 seconds (T+1.13) into the mission, someone (most likely the pilot, <u>Mike Smith</u>) said:

Uh-oh

Those were the last <u>recorded words</u> before all communication with the shuttle was lost. It was <u>breaking apart</u> and encountered multiple system failures <u>almost simultaneously</u>. (Scroll down on this link to view the data. Look, especially, at <u>events</u> beginning at 72.204 seconds.)

At first, people on the ground who saw parachutes believed the crew had ejected. But unlike the comparatively primitive <u>Mercury</u> space capsules 25 years before, there was no escape method for the shuttle's crew. The parachutes were intended to safely <u>carry the solid rocket boosters to an ocean landing</u> (so they could be reused during future flights).

Disengaged, the parachutes were flying on their own, with nothing attached.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/THE-LAST-WORDS-Challenger-Disaster</u>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at: <u>http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/THE-LAST-WORDS-Challenger-Disaster</u>









## Shuttle Breaking Apart Photos Image online, courtesy NASA. View this asset at: http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Shuttle-Breaking-Apart-Photos



## THE LAST WORDS

View this asset at: <a href="http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/THE-LAST-WORDS">http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/THE-LAST-WORDS</a>