

Elon Musk



Elon Musk was born on the 28th June 1971 in Pretoria, South Africa. After he finished high school at Pretoria Boys High, he went to study overseas in Canada and the USA. He studied Science and Economics.

From a young age, he was already a great businessman. By the time he was 28 years old, he had already sold his first successful company Zip2 for millions of dollars! He started and sold two more companies, X.com and PayPal, both of which he sold for billions of dollars. His next two big ventures were SpaceX and Tesla.

Elon wanted to successfully prove that electric cars and renewable energy for houses was even better than traditional engines and electricity from a power station. So the team at Tesla did just that. They have developed a solar roof which can provide the whole house with power as well as some of the world's best electric cars, which are not only kind to the environment but also have some amazing technology that improves the car's safety.

Tesla's Model S car includes an autopilot that allows the car to steer, accelerate and brake automatically. It can safely follow road markings and use its forward-facing radar to make sure there is a safe distance between its self and other cars. The Model S also monitors traffic using its sensors so that it will only change lanes when it is safe to do so.



SpaceX



SpaceX was also started by Elon Musk in 2002. He wanted to reduce the cost of space travel so that people could one day travel to and live on Mars.

SpaceX have made and launched advanced rockets and spacecraft. They have delivered satellites into space and sent supplies to the International Space Station.

On the 30th May 2020, NASA and SpaceX launched two astronauts, Robert Behnken and Doug Hurley in the Dragon Crew Capsule attached to a Falcon 9 rocket built by SpaceX.

It was the first time that American Astronauts had been launched into space from the USA since 2011 and the first time a private company has sent humans into space using its own rocket.

The two astronauts met up with the ISS (international Space Station) where they will stay for 110 days to complete a range of experiments before returning to Earth in their Dragon capsule.

SpaceX have also designed and launched the Falcon Heavy Rocket. It is the most powerful space rocket in the world and parts of it are reusable! This reusable technology is a big part of SpaceX's mission to get to Mars. Space travel is extremely expensive, so reusable machinery is a great benefit.

Questions

1. Name five of the business' that Elon Musk has had.

2. In paragraph two Elon is described as a great businessman. Give one reason why this is a good title for him
3. Why did Elon start Tesla?
4. How did Elon get the money to start Tesla and SpaceX?
5. Which two items did Tesla build?
6. What does the autopilot function on the Model S car?
7. Which two companies worked together on the project to send astronauts to the ISS in May 2020?

8. Give one reason why this space flight to the ISS was unique?

9. What do the astronauts spend their time in space doing?

10. The Space Shuttle program was ended in 2011. Why are the SpaceX rockets better for keeping space travel going into the future?

11. What skills do you think Elon has that has made him so successful?

12. Would you be interested in volunteering to join the SpaceX mission to Mars?
Give a reason for your answer