

UNIT 10: REACHING FOR THE SKIES

IELTS Speaking Part 3: Discussion (4–5 minutes)

1. What are the benefits of space exploration?

built on cooperation	countless benefits	driving force	knock-on effect
outside the box	powerful reminder	pushes the boundaries	sparks curiosity
spirit of unity	stemmed from	take for granted	take up careers

Well, there are (1)_____ that come from space exploration, both direct and indirect. To begin with, it has been a major (2)_____ behind technological innovation. Many of the conveniences we (3)_____ today — things like GPS navigation, weather forecasting, and satellite communication — all (4)_____ research originally carried out for space missions.

On top of that, space exploration has a (5)_____ on education and human ambition. It (6)_____ among young people and encourages them to (7)_____ in science, technology, and engineering. In a broader sense, it (8)_____ of human knowledge, forcing us to think (9)_____ and find creative solutions to incredibly complex problems.

Beyond the practical side, it also serves as a (10)_____ of what humanity can achieve when we work together. Many international space projects are (11)_____ rather than competition, and that (12)_____ is something we desperately need here on Earth.

2. Do you think governments should spend so much money on space projects?

addressing urgent issues	at the expense	direct impact on	down the drain
filters back into	goes unnoticed	strike a balance	tackling pressing issues
technological breakthroughs	thought-provoking	vanish into thin air	worth investing in

That's a really (13)_____ question. Personally, I believe space exploration is (14)_____ , but it has to be done in a balanced and responsible way. On the one hand, I completely understand the critics who argue that taxpayers' money could be better spent (15)_____ such as poverty, education, or healthcare. These are problems that have a (16)_____ people's day-to-day lives.

On the other hand, space research has a ripple effect that often (17)_____ . The money poured into space programs doesn't just (18)_____ — it (19)_____ the economy by creating jobs, fostering innovation, and leading to (20)_____ that eventually find their way into everyday life.

So, in my view, governments shouldn't pour money (21)_____ , but rather (22)_____ between exploring outer space and (23)_____ here on Earth. After all, progress on one front doesn't have to come (24)_____ of the other.

3. Will humans ever live on another planet?

adapt and rise

become a reality

enormous undertaking

on the horizon

push the limits

self-sufficient ecosystem

set up a colony

sustain life

taking baby steps

without constant support

I believe it's certainly possible, but probably not in the near future. Establishing a permanent human presence on another planet — like Mars, for instance — is an (25)_____ that would (26)_____ of human endurance and technology. We're already (27)_____ in that direction with missions like SpaceX's Mars program and NASA's long-term plans, but there's still a long way to go before we can (28)_____ beyond Earth.

The biggest challenge isn't just getting there — it's building a (29)_____ where humans can survive (30)_____ from Earth. We'd need breakthroughs in renewable energy, food production, and radiation protection. That said, I'm optimistic. Humans have an incredible ability to (31)_____ to the occasion, and history has shown that what once seemed impossible can eventually (32)_____.

So yes, I think one day we'll manage to (33)_____ on another planet. It might not happen in our lifetime, but it's definitely (34)_____.

4. What are some dangers of space travel?

exposure to cosmic radiation

hostile to human life

inherently risky

no room for error

not for the faint-hearted

pose a constant threat

psychological strain

put lives on the line

take a toll on

tiny technical glitch

Space travel is (35)_____ because it takes place in an environment that's completely (36)_____. One of the biggest dangers is (37)_____, which can cause serious health issues over time. Astronauts are also constantly at risk of equipment malfunction, and in space, even a (38)_____ can spiral out of control and (39)_____.

Another major concern is the (40)_____ that comes from isolation and confinement. Spending months — or even years — in a cramped spacecraft can really (41)_____ someone's mental health. On top of that, space debris and micro-meteorites (42)_____, since a collision at high velocity could be catastrophic.

In short, space travel is (43)_____. It requires an extraordinary level of training, precision, and teamwork. One wrong move could be fatal, because in space, there's (44)_____.