

Reading 2

Skills:

- Connect information
- Establish sequences

Getting started: If you had the means to travel to the space, would you do it?

SPACE TOURISM



Traveling to the space has been an everlasting fascination for humans, and after many centuries it is now more tangible. So, what would it be like if people really wanted to escape from it all and leave the planet completely? Space tourism will be a billion-dollar market in 2050, and there will be several companies offering trips. For instance, Blue Origin, the company set up by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, can offer you spectacular views from its New Shepard spacecraft as you rise over 100 kilometers above Earth.

Suppose you can travel to space, surely this will imply a full complex process. Firstly, you'll need to arrive at the desert launch site in West Texas two days before your flight so you can begin your astronaut training. You'll receive mission and vehicle specifications, detailed safety information and

instructions on how to move in a weightless environment. When the morning of your flight arrives, it's time to scale the steps of the launch tower and climb through the **hatch** of the capsule, which sits on top of an 18-meter-tall rocket.

Once you're secured to your seat and have received final instructions for launch, the countdown to lift-off will begin. The extreme acceleration will force you back into your seat, and you'll experience over **3 g** for 150 seconds, and then the booster engine will cut off as you glide into space. The capsule will separate from the booster, and from the calm silence will come the signal to release your harness. As you float out of your seat and marvel at the weightless freedom, you'll forget that you're travelling faster than Mach 3 (three times the speed of sound) and stare back at Earth out of the capsule window.

Before descent, you will return to your seat and be secured again for re-entry. Forces of over **5 g** will push against you before the parachutes deploy and **thrusters** fire, reducing your speed as you gently float back to Earth. Once you've landed, just miles from where you launched, you can go and collect the complimentary souvenirs of your thrilling trip, one that you'll never forget.

**Adapted from How it Works – World of Tomorrow. Fifth Edition. DK Publishing.*

Glossary:

- **Hatch:** An opening or a door in a ship, aircraft or spacecraft.
- **3 g:** The **g** stands for the amount of acceleration that is caused by gravity. This is what is commonly referred to as g-force. This gravitational force is the force that pulls or attracts all physical objects towards the center of our planet.
- **Thruster:** A small engine used to provide extra force, especially on a spacecraft.

Organize the following events in chronological order based on the information in the text. The first step has been provided.

- a. Go up a structure and access the vehicle that will take you to outer space. _____
- b. Now you can move around the vehicle and feel the sensations gravity offers. _____
- c. The spacecraft will rise into the sky. _____
- d. You are back on your home planet. _____
- e. Go to an arid area where the spacecraft will take off. 1
- f. Parts of the spacecraft will split. _____
- g. Find your sit and fasten your straps so that you can travel safe. _____
- h. Get ready to return to Earth. _____
- i. You'll be provided with a description of the spacecraft and what you will do in space. _____
- j. Go and get a present that will remind you of this great trip forever. _____

What do you think?

Do you think governments should continue spending lots of money to explore the space? Is it really necessary?