Extra Training

Reading Task 9426

Read the text. For each question choose the correct answer

Like Nothing On Earth

I couldn't believe my eyes as people in blue space suits floated around on the screen in front of me. They were laughing and trying to catch objects drifting past them. A voice spoke "Imagine bating like an astronaut. Experience true weightlessness, just as NASA's astronauts do, aboard our specially modified Boeing 727 airplane, the Zero G aircraft!" The video came to an end and our instructor switched on the lights before speaking to us. "So, are we ready then?" I could never have imagined what I was about to do! It all started a few months ago when a friend of mine encouraged me to enter a competition on a local radio station. The winner would get to experience an 'anti-gravity' flight operated by a company called Zero G. An opportunity like this is rare as the tailing price for a ticket is over £3,000. The only other way to access such a flight is to qualify as a student for one of the educational programmes offered. So, you can imagine my surprise when I got a call saying I had won.

The day of the flight finally arrived and it was a bright, cool morning as our small group made their way to a large airplane hangar. Our instructor was there to greet us and we were each given our own blue space suits. Next, we sat down to watch an informational video. It explained that we would experience 'micro gravity' or zero gravity as our plane did a series of steep climbs and descents. It was during the descents that we would experience zero gravity that would last about 30 seconds and hen gravity would suddenly return. Finally, the video **demonstrated** some safety techniques such as keeping our feet **down** or risk landing on our heads. Just before boarding the plane our instructor recommended not getting caught up 1 with doing flips and turns but instead trying to enjoy the unique sensation of weightlessness. I would later realise how important his suggestion really was.

The plane took off and soon we were high above the clouds. Suddenly it was time. "Feet down!" called out our instructor. !Whoosh! My body rose abruptly from the floor and I was floating light as a feather! I tried to turn but there was nothing to hold on to. An arm caught my foot and sent me slowly spinning towards the ceiling. I was hovering effortlessly near the ceiling when all of a sudden, the pilot pulled up and I fell to the floor! This happened another 12 more times during the flight. I felt like a pinball bouncing around in all directions before crashing to the ground again. On the last time, I remembered what our instructor had said; I just laid back and took in the amazing sensation of weightlessness.

Before I knew it, we were back on the ground and taking pictures in front of our spacecraft. The feeling of zero gravity is almost impossible to explain. Unlike skydiving and free falling, a person does not feel the pull of gravity. Nothing I've experienced before can come close to what it's like to float in anti-gravity. It's something everyone should experience for themselves. I know I'm glad I did as it was a once in a lifetime experience that I'll never forget!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

1. The Zero G aircraft _____

1. belongs to NASA.
2. was adapted for zero gravity flights.
3. was specially made for space travel.
4. is an astronaut training plane.

2. The writer was able to go *on* the anti-gravity flight because _____

1. his friend won it on a local radio station.
2. he won the money for it in a competition.
3. he qualified for an educational programme.
4. it was a prize he won.

3. Before the flight, the instructor_____

1. demonstrated flips and turns for the flight.
2. explained safety techniques for the flight.
3. gave some important advice about the flight.
4. explained how zero gravity is achieved.

4. When zero gravity begins, the writer describes his body as_____

1. going quickly up in the air.
2. rising slowly off the ground.
3. spinning out of control to the ceiling.
4. a pinball being bounced about.

5. The writer feels the Zero gravity experience is _____

1. similar to free falling.
2. not something everyone should try.
3. difficult to describe.
4. something he definitely wants to do again.

LIVEWORKSHEETS