10 Reaching for the skies

Space, the planets

Space

1.1 **Answer these questions.**

1 Would you like to travel into space? (Why? / Why not?)

2 What do you imagine it would be like?

3 What problems do you think you would experience in space?

1.2 **Complete the text below with suitable words from the box.**

astronauts atmosphere commercial explorers
launch outer simulator weightlessness

If you have ever dreamed of travelling in space then our (1)..... space travel programme will make that dream a reality. Of course, passengers will need to prepare for this experience. However, unlike the months of training that (2)..... undergo, our passengers will be ready for (3)..... within two days. To prepare for a truly out-of-this-world experience, passengers will spend two days in our special training facility. There the passengers will be able to experience zero gravity in a special (4).....; this will allow the passengers to acclimatise. During the flight itself a rocket will propel the spacecraft into suborbital space in excess of 100,000 m above the Earth's (5)..... . This will allow the passengers to experience (6)..... . Our space (7)..... will be able to float around the cabin and view the Earth and (8)..... space for approximately ten minutes prior to re-entry and landing.

1.3 **Read the text again and find words that match these definitions.**

1 an actual event .....

2 go through an experience .....

3 the force or pull from the Earth .....

4 get used to a change in conditions .....

5 drive something forwards .....

6 more than .....

7 stay up in the air or in water .....

8 entering the Earth's atmosphere again .....

1.4 **Complete the sentences with words from the text. You will need to change the form of the words.**

1 Some people believe that space e..... is a waste of money.

2 Climbing extremely high mountains is made all the more difficult because of the drop in a..... pressure.

3 Spacecrafts need to reach extremely high speeds in order to escape the g..... pull of the Earth.

4 Last year the astronauts u..... a series of mental and physical tests in order to qualify for the mission.

5 This computer program s..... extremes of weather so that pilots can experience difficult flying conditions.

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2.3 **WORD BUILDING** **Complete the table.**

Noun	*Adjective*
atmosphere	
	cosmic
	galactic
	gravitational
horizon	
	lunar
	meteoric
sun	
	stellar
	terrestrial
universe	

Vocabulary note

The suffix *-ic* tells us that a word is an adjective. How many adjectives in 2.3 end in *-ic*? Other common examples are: *economic*, *scenic*, *tragic*.

2.4 **Complete the sentences with suitable words from the table in 2.3.**

1 The moon appears much bigger when it is close to the ..... .

2 The North Star is the brightest star in our ..... .

3 Many scientists believe that dinosaurs became extinct when a ..... hit the Earth.

4 A ..... eclipse occurs when the moon is hidden by the sun.

5 Many people wonder if there is intelligent life elsewhere in the ..... .

6 The teacher told us to draw a ..... line across the page.

7 The most successful products in the world are those that have a ..... appeal.

8 ..... energy is becoming more common nowadays.

3 **Read this news report and decide whether the following statements are true or false. Give a reason for each answer using one of the underlined words in the text. Then check the meaning of any of the underlined words you don't know and write them in your notebook.**

In May 1973, the USA launched its first manned space station. The station, called Skylab, managed to carry three different crews of astronauts over a nine-month period, in spite of the fact that it lost a meteor shield on launch. In February 1974, the final crew returned to Earth and, for the next five and a half years, the Skylab continued to orbit the Earth, unmanned and unused. Its low orbit gradually pulled the 77-tonne Skylab down towards the Earth making a crash landing inevitable and causing a great deal of concern around the world. On 11 July 1979 the Skylab eventually crashed into the southern ocean off Esperance, Australia. Fortunately the debris fell in mostly uninhabited areas and locals scrambled to collect a souvenir. A 17 year-old from Esperance flew to America to claim a $10,000 reward for being the first to deliver a piece of the station to a newspaper. The local council of Esperance issued the USA with a $400 fine for littering. It has never been paid. There are currently approximately 8,000 pieces of space junk floating above our heads thanks to the satellites, space shuttles and space stations out there. One example is a screwdriver lost during a space shuttle mission in 1985 which has never been recovered.

Statements	*True/False*	*Reason*
1 In late 1974 there were people on board the space station.	.....	*It was* ..... .
2 The Skylab may have floated in space for ever.	.....	*A crash was* ..... .
3 Very few people lived in the area where it landed.	.....	*The area was* ..... .

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4 **Complete the text using suitable words from this unit.**

'Space belongs to whoever gets there first.' Do you agree with this statement?

Most of (1) p..... Earth has already been mapped and explored, so it is not surprising that explorers should turn their attention to other parts of the (2) u..... . The planets in our (3) s..... s..... have become the next frontier to be conquered.

We all remember the so-called (4) s..... race of the 1960s when the US and USSR were each determined to be the first to (5) l..... on the moon. However, I do not believe that planting a flag on the moon gives anyone the right to claim it as theirs.

With the increasing use of (6) s..... to monitor activities here on Earth, as well as the very real prospect of space tourism, now is a good time to ask who owns or, more importantly, who governs the vast area of space above us? In the relatively short time that man has been travelling in space we have already left sufficient (7) d..... behind to show that we are as careless in our space travels as on Earth. The broken shuttle parts have simply been left to (8) f..... in the atmosphere and cause a very real threat to everyone here on Earth.
Clearly space belongs to all of us. Although there is an international (9) s..... s ..... , this is currently only involved in research. I think we need to act quickly to establish a set of international laws that govern (10) o..... space.

5 **PRONUNCIATION** 10b **Each of the following words has a weak sound (ə) or schwa, e.g. *about*. Underline the schwa in each word, then listen and check your answers. Practise saying the words. There may be more than one schwa in each word or phrase.**

astronaut atmosphere commercial explorer exploration galaxy
horizon horizontal outer satellite solar system sustain universal

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