

Homework

 12 Read the article again. Complete the gaps (1–6) with sentences (A–G). There is one extra sentence you don't need.

- A And, as other companies enter this new space race, this will force the price of tickets down.
- B At the moment, this sounds like science fiction, but what was science fiction 50 years ago is now science fact.
- C But the number of people who actually want to go into space is still not clear.
- D One question we need to ask is: what does going into space mean?
- E Since then, only a further seven people have paid to go into space.
- F Such technology will not only reduce the costs, but will lead to an increase in the number of launches.
- G Virgin Galactic is investing money into developing hypersonic planes that will fly on routes connecting different cities.

Match the underlined words in the article to the meanings.

- 1 a way of thinking about something
- 2 a very small number of people or things
- 3 difficulties or problems that stop you achieving something
- 4 able to be done
- 5 become greater or more serious very quickly

THE OUTER EDGE OF TOURISM

In 2001, Dennis Tito, an American entrepreneur, became the first person to pay to go into space and, in effect, become the first ever space tourist.

(1) That is set to change and space tourism will become a reality for more than just a handful of people.

A number of companies are now racing against each other to see which will be the first commercial company with a doable space programme.

(2) In 2018, Virgin Galactic sent its SpaceShipTwo aircraft with pilots Rick Sturckow and Mark Stucky to the outer edges of the atmosphere. But, in the future, is that going to be enough for space tourists or will they want to go further?

Over the next few years, the race to send tourists into space is going to escalate. We know this because there are at least three companies already selling tickets for flights they hope will take off in the near future. At the moment, one of the biggest obstacles to space tourism is the cost, but this is going to come down, just as the cost of flying is much cheaper than it was in the past. (3)

The Director of Aerospace Operations at Spaceport America, Dr Bill Gutman, thinks that the breakthrough will come when reusable space vehicles are invented. (4) Elon Musk, CEO of SpaceX, is planning to take people to the Moon and back on its Starship spacecraft and some people think that it won't be long until people will be living on the Moon.

However, in a recent survey conducted by PEW Research Center in the US, half of the respondents said they didn't think that routine space travel will actually happen in the next 50 years. But if you'd asked people in the 1950s if people would land on the Moon, the results would probably have been the same and that became a reality in 1969.

Even if space tourism doesn't become a reality for most people, it is still likely that many of us will benefit from the current spending and research. (5) For example, this could reduce the flying time from London to Sydney to just a few hours, rather than the current time of more than 20 hours.

And space tourism could change us in other ways. Richard Branson, the founder of Virgin Galactic, believes that people who experience flying in space will return to Earth with a different perspective.

Imagine sitting in an airport sometime in the future and hearing the words 'The next Moon flight leaves at 14.30. Passengers for the flight should check in at the desk and make their way to the departure lounge.' (6)

