

Space Tourism

Try to imagine your dream holiday. Where would you go? How about a trip to space? This might sound like science fiction but soon it may actually be possible.

Until recently, only astronauts have been able to travel to space. They spend years training. They carry out research on their missions. Soon this could all change. Three well known companies are racing to get normal people into space. Sending ordinary people into space is known as space tourism.

SpaceX

This company is owned by Elon Musk. Elon Musk is an American. He is the richest man in the world. He also owns a company called Tesla. Tesla makes electric cars and are testing self-driving cars.

Blue Origin

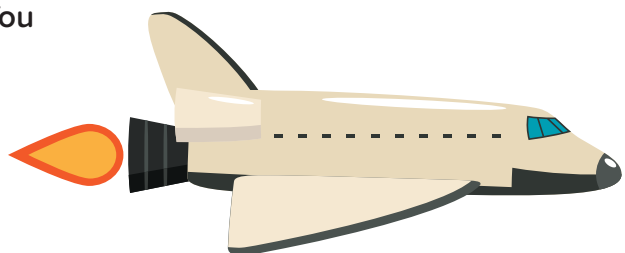
This company is owned by Jeff Bezos. Jeff Bezos is American. He is the second richest man in the world. Bezos also owns Amazon.

Virgin Galactic

This company is owned by Richard Branson. Richard Branson is British. He also owns Virgin Trains, Virgin Atlantic and Virgin Media.

How will it work?

Buying a plane ticket these days is easy. One day, it could be just as easy to buy a ticket into space. On board the spacecraft you would have your own seat. You would just need to find your seat and prepare for take off. You would be able to look out the window and see the earth floating in the darkness. You could also experience what it's like to feel weightless. This is because there is no gravity in space.

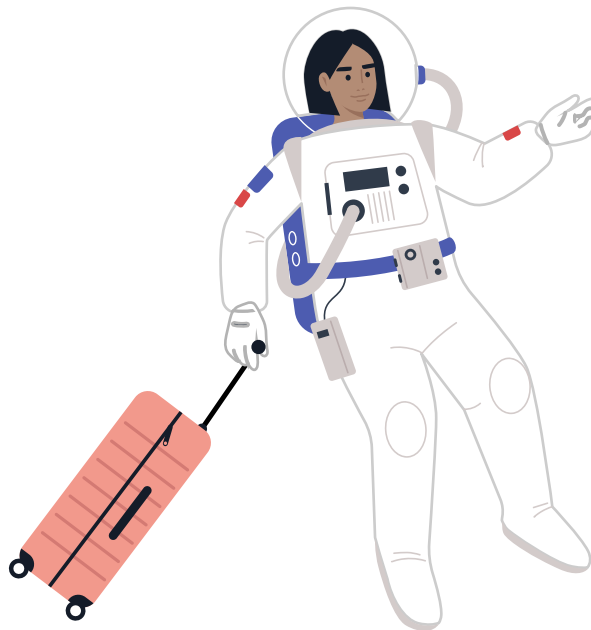


How much will it cost?

Travelling to space is not cheap. Only people who are very rich will be able to afford it. A seat in a Virgin Galactic flight costs \$450,000 (£330,000). The flight takes passengers to the edge of space. A seat on one of SpaceX's trips is at least ten times more expensive. The space shuttle orbits the Earth and takes 3 days to complete.

Is it worth it?

Some people are very excited by the idea of space travel. However, some think that it is a waste of money. They argue that this money would be better spent on Earth. Billions of dollars are spent each year on space travel. Could this money be better spent on improving our planet instead?



Questions

03

- 1 What does the author mean when they say that space travel may sound like science fiction? (tick)

- ☐ It sounds like a story about aliens.
- ☐ It sounds like it's not believable.
- ☐ Science fiction now includes space travel.
- ☐ The author has written a science fiction book about space travel.

- 2 What does space tourism involve? (tick)

- ☐ Sending astronauts into space on their days off.
- ☐ Sending scientists into space to do extra training.
- ☐ Sending normal people into space to carry out research.
- ☐ Sending ordinary people into space for their enjoyment.

- 3 Draw a line to match each company with its owner. (tick)

- | | | |
|-----------------|---|-------------------|
| SpaceX | • | • Richard Branson |
| Blue Origin | • | • Elon Musk |
| Virgin Galactic | • | • Jeff Bezos |

- 4 Which other company does Jeff Bezos own?
-

- 5 Which of the three companies is owned by the richest man in the world?
-

- 6** Why would people be able to feel what it's like to be weightless? (tick)

- ☐ There is much less gravity in space.
- ☐ You would have to go on a space diet.
- ☐ There is more gravity in space.
- ☐ You would leave all your baggage on earth.

- 7** Which fact is true about space travel? (tick)

- ☐ Anyone can travel into space.
- ☐ Only people who can afford to spend a lot of money on a ticket can travel into space.
- ☐ At the moment it's too expensive for anyone to travel into space.
- ☐ Only billionaires can travel into space.

- 8** How long does it take for the SpaceX shuttle to orbit the earth?
-

- 9** Why does the author end the text with a question? (tick)

- ☐ The author knows that the reader has the answer.
- ☐ They don't know the answer so they're asking the reader.
- ☐ They want the reader to pause and think.
- ☐ They want the reader to send them a response.

- 10** There are three questions above the last three paragraphs. What are these questions? (tick)

- ☐ subheadings
- ☐ paragraphs
- ☐ headings
- ☐ headlines

Score:



Answers

A

1 What does the author mean when they say that space travel may sound like science fiction?

☒ It sounds like it's not believable.

2 What does space tourism involve?

☒ Sending ordinary people into space for their enjoyment.

3 Draw a line to match each company with its owner.

SpaceX	Richard Branson
Blue Origin	Elon Musk
Virgin Galactic	Jeff Bezos

4 Which other company does Jeff Bezos own?

Amazon

5 Which of the three companies is owned by the richest man in the world?

SpaceX

6 Why would people be able to feel what it's like to be weightless?

☒ There is much less gravity in space.

7 Which fact is true about space travel?

☒ Only people who can afford to spend a lot of money on a ticket can travel into space.

8 How long does it take for the SpaceX shuttle to orbit the earth?

3 days

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