

**Questions:** Why are people signing up to go to space? Is space tourism really necessary?

### Key vocabulary

**a pipe dream** – a hope for the future

**tycoon** - a wealthy, powerful person

**well-funded** – plenty of money

**price tag** – the cost

**spare cash** – extra money

**gadgets** - small mechanical or electronic device

**carbon footprint** - the amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere

**soot** – black carbon

### Key expressions

**with any luck** – if one is lucky

**beg to differ** – to disagree

**in favour of** – in support

**on the cusp** – the point that something is about to change

**skyrocketing** – to cause to rise or increase abruptly

**The sky is the limit** – there is no limit

### Monologue

**Start and Introduction:** Today I have been asked to talk about the super exciting subject of space tourism.

- We're on the cusp of a new era of space exploration, with commercial companies like Virgin Galactic and Blue Origin developing spacecrafts enabling tourists to visit space.

**Body: why are people signing up?**

- People are signing up for space travel because it's the ultimate adventure tourism.
- Blue Origin recently announced that it will take a Japanese tycoon on a trip around the moon.
- To the ordinary person, commercial space travel may seem like a pipe dream, the first trip to space by a tourist costed \$20million. Now these few well-funded space companies are in development of commercial rockets with a more affordable price tag of between \$US250,000 – 300,000.
- For those that have spare cash this may seem quite reasonable. To us normal folk the cost is still seems outrageous.
- The passengers will be transported to a height of between 100 and 160km above earth, experience 3–6 minutes of weightlessness and a view of the stars, take a few snaps before being taken back down to earth.

**Is space tourism really necessary?**

- There is no doubt in my mind that Space tourism will happen, it's just a matter of time and the clock is ticking down to blast off! Blue Origin and Virgin Galactic and in a race to be the world's first commercial spaceline.
- Let's take a look at some of associated benefits, from the perspective of science space tourism will be extremely beneficial as it will allow scientists to collect far more data more quickly. We may answer the long-asked question "is there life out there" faster.
- My hope is that when the space travellers look back on Earth they will gain a deeper appreciation for our planet and with any luck will want to take a more active approach to protect it when they return.
- On top of that certain technological advances and inventions have benefitted from space technology research and development and will continue doing so with the heightened interest in commercial space tourism.
- However, on the other side of the coin there are numerous drawbacks.
- For instance, the impact of space travel may put all living life on Earth at risk. The entrepreneurs of the space travel argue that the carbon footprint is comparable with normal airline travel however scientists "beg to differ" and are concerned about the soot (black carbon) that results from rocket emissions. Can this soot exponentially increase climate change? Will it cause an acceleration of icecap melting, damage to the ozone layer and an increase temperature.
- Furthermore, unknown health risks await space tourists, the travellers are more likely to be from a far more health diverse group than current astronauts. Travellers may be putting your health at risk.

**Signalling the end:** I'd like to finish by saying that I for one am not in favour of space tourism until there are clear answers to the safety of the travellers and our planet, I am not comfortable supporting a few super-rich at the risk of the planet we live on.

**Conclusion:** So, in short space tourism is on the verge of lift-off. Already tickets are in demand and ticket requests are sky-rocketing!, technology is advancing, the sky is the limit for the next era of tourist travel. However, let's not rush in without totally understanding the consequences. Thank you!