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[1] Until the end of the 20th century, only scientists and astronauts could travel to space for research purposes. However, in the last few years, it has become possible for tourists to go on trips to space. In July 2021, two big American spaceflight companies, Virgin Galactic and Blue Origin, made their first successful commercial flights to space. Although the prices are very expensive, some rich people could buy their tickets. These trips have officially started space tourism.



[2] Richard Branson was the first commercial customer to fly to space with his company, Virgin Galactic, in July 2021. He wanted to go to space before his competitor, Blue Origin. Branson was accompanied by three people. They went up to space at an altitude of 87 kilometers above the Earth, allowing the passengers a panoramic view of the world for about four minutes. A few days later, Blue Origin successfully sent their first commercial spaceflight with Jeff Bezos on board. His brother and two other people flew with him. They reached an altitude of 100 kilometers and stayed in space for a few minutes.



[3] In December 2021, the Japanese billionaire Yusaku Maezawa arrived with a videographer to spend 12 days on the International Space Station. While up <u>there</u>, he answered common questions about life in space and also did some fun activities to encourage interest in space. Maezawa booked the spaceflight through the American company Space Adventures, which has previously sent seven tourists to the space station on Russian vehicles. Maezawa is also planning a trip to the moon with SpaceX

company in 2023. "At first I was a bit scared, but seeing the Earth from space made me excited and gave me some comfort," he said.

[4] Going to space is costly. One person ticket can cost more than \$200,000. Space trips are not totally safe as any accident can be deadly. However, many wealthy people would like to take up this challenge just for the spectacular view or for fun. Beth Moses from Virgin Galactic describes his trip to space as a "magical experience that gives you feelings of optimism and wonder. It's a rare opportunity to see how unique the Earth is, to see <u>it</u> without borders." However, other people consider space tourism as a waste of money. "I feel really bad every time somebody pays \$250,000 for a single flight, while people in other countries do not find what to eat, have no access to schools or hospitals," says James Walker, a social activist.

[5] Nowadays, as technology and infrastructure improve, space industry is expanding fast. It's possible that the prices will go down and more people will be able to try the experience of traveling to space.

Adapted from: www.forbes.com

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<ul> <li><u>Accept any appropriate answer not mentioned in this key.</u></li> <li><b>I. COMPREHENSION</b> (15 POINTS) <u>Testees should not be penalised for spelling and grammar mistakes in the comprehension section.</u></li> <li><b>A. TRUE OR FALSE:</b> (3 pts) (1 pt each: 0.5 pt for the right choice and 0.5 pt for the right justification. Consider the justification only if the choice is correct. Quotes from the texts are acceptable.)</li> <li>1. F. He was accompanied by three people.</li> <li>2. T are not totally safe/any accident can be deadly.</li> <li>3. T. It's possible that the prices will go down.</li> <li><b>B. WH QUESTIONS:</b> (3 pts; 1 pt each)</li> <li>1. In (July) 2021.</li> <li>2. He answered common questions about life in space/he did some fun activities to encourage interest in space.</li> <li>3. because of/thanks to improvement in technology and infrastructure.</li> <li><b>C. SENTENCE COMPLETION:</b> (3 pts; 1 pt each)</li> <li>1 make successful commercial flights to space. /start space commercial trips.</li> <li>2 go to the moon (on a trip with Space X company.)</li> <li>3 go to/be spent on food, schools and hospitals.</li> <li><b>D. PICK OUT:</b> (2 pts; 1 pt each)</li> <li>1. made me excited (and gave me some comfort.)</li> <li>2. just for the spectacular view or for fun.</li> </ul>											
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