

Today's reading comprehension is a news article about the SpaceX rocket launch that took place at the weekend.

Tomorrow there will be questions for you to answer about what you have read.

At the end of today's lesson there are some extra things that you can do in your own time today and tomorrow.

Have a brilliant day!



SpaceX Launch Sends Astronauts to ISS

Why did the rocket launch from Florida?

- Florida is on the east coast of the USA. When rockets launch, they can go east over the Atlantic ocean and get boost from the Earth's spin.
- Being close to the equator where the Earth's spin is faster also helps the rocket reach high speeds.

A new era of spaceflight is underway. On Saturday, NASA and SpaceX launched astronauts from the USA for the first time in almost a decade.

The astronauts aboard SpaceX's Crew Dragon spacecraft, Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley, gathered speeds to almost 17 000mph. They were then ready to meet up with the International Space Station (ISS).

They will remain on the ISS to carry out scientific research. They will do this for between one and four months.

After their mission, the astronauts will climb back aboard the Crew Dragon spacecraft. It will **undock** from the space station and splash down in the ocean not far from where they took off.

Saturday's launch from Florida is a huge step for future space exploration.

It is the first time a **commercial company** has sent humans into orbit using its own rocket.

This is also a big step in the journey towards **space tourism**. According to the SpaceX website, it "lays the groundwork for future missions to the Moon, Mars, and beyond".

Humans have never set foot on Mars and there have only ever been six manned missions to the Moon. The last of these was Apollo 17 all the way back in 1972.

The success of this launch makes further projects more possible. NASA plan to return

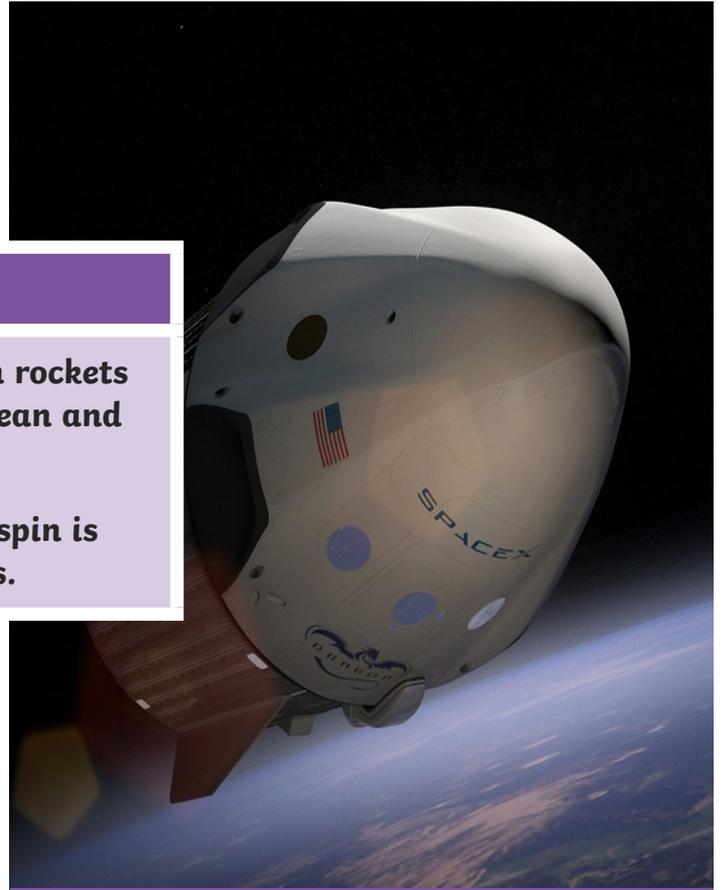


Illustration: A SpaceX spacecraft.

people to the Moon by 2024 as part of the Artemis programme.

The Artemis programme is developing brand-new spacesuits, rockets, spacecraft and even an **outpost**. The outpost will allow astronauts and supplies to be transported to the Moon's surface. According to NASA's website, it will also act "as a staging point for deep space exploration".

With so many plans being made for future exploration of space, who knows where we could travel in the future?

Glossary

undock	Detach from another craft in space.
commercial company	A company that is organised to make money.
space tourism	Travelling into space for fun.
outpost	A distant settlement or place.

The additional things for you to do are on the next two pages -
do as many of these as you like!



Illustration: A SpaceX spaceship.

Explore



One of the astronauts, Bob Behnken, helped install a famous part of the ISS, called the cupola, on a previous mission.

The cupola is the large window that looks back to the Earth and appears in many photographs.

Using the Internet and reference books, explore what the Earth looks like from space.

Try drawing or painting your own picture of our small planet as it is seen from space.

Investigate



The capsule the astronauts flew on was known as Capsule 206, but after the launch the astronauts renamed it Endeavour.

It is a tradition to let the astronauts name the ship that they will fly on.

Investigate the different names of spacecraft and command modules that have been to space and why they were given those names.

Then, think about what you would call your own spaceship.

Explain your reasons.

Write



The spacecraft carried a soft toy to the ISS.

When the toy starts to float, it shows the astronauts that they've become weightless.

If you were going to space, what items would you like to take?

Write a list of your favourite things. Explain why it is special to you.



Think

Where is this rocket heading? Who is onboard?



Respond

Create a comic strip telling the story of the astronauts onboard this craft.



Solve

The manned space flight, made by Yuri Gagarin, lasted 1 hour and 48 minutes. The second manned space flight was made by Alan Shepard and lasted 15 minutes. How much longer was Gagarin in space than Shepard? How long did they spend in space in total?



Reimagine

What are the most unusual methods of human space flight ever dreamt up. Draw pictures of what they may look like.



Discuss

Who is in charge in space? Should any one country have authority? How should laws in space be agreed?



Discover

Fact: The SpaceX Crew Dragon is the first commercial rocket to carry people into space.

Question: What other companies and organisations have built or plan to build manned rockets?



SpaceX Success **Answers**

How much longer was Gagarin in space than Shepard?

1 hour and 48 minutes - 15 minutes = 1 hour and 33 minutes

How long did they spend in space in total?

1 hour and 48 minutes + 15 minutes = 2 hours and 3 minutes