



Ready for Lift-Off

What is NASA?

- **NASA is the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in the USA.**
- **It trains astronauts and organises missions into space.**

Photo: A SpaceX rocket being prepared.

NASA Mission Ready for Lift-Off!

NASA and SpaceX are working together to send two astronauts into space. They will set off on 27th May from the Kennedy Space Centre in Florida.

It will be the first time that SpaceX will have sent two astronauts into space. The company wants to be able to launch **commercial** flights into space in the future.

On its website, SpaceX says its goal is to help 'people to live on other planets'.

For the moment, though, two experienced astronauts are on the **mission**. Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley will travel to the International Space Station (ISS).

The ISS is a spacecraft that **orbits** Earth. If you look in the night sky, you can sometimes see it travelling around our planet.

The ISS is a place where scientists carry out research into our **Solar System**. It's not clear yet how long the astronauts will spend on the ISS.

NASA plans to send more astronauts into space in the future. They are planning something called the Artemis program.

Its aim is to send astronauts to the Moon by 2024.

As part of the Artemis program, a woman will walk on the Moon for the first time. NASA says that the astronauts will use what they learn on the Moon to help them when they travel to Mars for the first time.

For now, people will be watching this mission to see how it goes. Who knows who else will travel into space?

Glossary

commercial To sell something in order to make money.

mission A journey into space.

orbits To travel around another object in space.

Solar System The collection of eight planets and their moons in orbit round the Sun, together with asteroids, meteoroids, and comets.

Questions

1. Find and copy the names of the two astronauts who will travel on the mission.

1. _____

2. _____

2. On what date will the mission set off?

☐ 27th May

☐ 28th May

☐ 4th July

☐ 1st September

3. 'The company wants to be able to launch commercial flights into space in the future.'
Tick the word that is closest in meaning to 'launch'.

☐ consider

☐ find

☐ start

☐ stop

4. 'For the moment, though, two experienced astronauts are on the mission.'
This suggests that...

☐ it's the first time these astronauts have been into space.

☐ they have been into space before.

☐ they don't want to go.

☐ they can't wait to go.

5. If the Artemis Program is successful, it will be an important moment in history. Find **one** piece of evidence that shows this.

6. Explain what the story is about in 20 words or fewer.

Answers

1. Find and copy the names of the two astronauts who will travel on the mission.

Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley

2. On what date will the mission set off?

☒ **27th May**

☐ 28th May

☐ 4th July

☐ 1st September

3. 'The company wants to be able to launch commercial flights into space in the future.'

Tick the word that is closest in meaning to 'launch'.

☐ consider

☐ find

☒ **start**

☐ stop

4. 'For the moment, though, two experienced astronauts are on the mission.'

This suggests that...

☐ it's the first time these astronauts have been into space.

☒ **they have been into space before.**

☐ they don't want to go.

☐ they can't wait to go.

5. If the Artemis Program is successful, it will be an important moment in history. Find a piece of evidence that shows this.

Accept either it will be the first time a woman has walked on the Moon or it will be the first time astronauts will travel to Mars.

6. Explain what the story is about in 20 words or fewer.

Accept any reasonable summary that is 20 words or fewer, e.g. NASA and SpaceX are working together to send two astronauts into space. They will set off on 27th May.