**5th Grade – UNIT 5**

**Opinion Writing Task**

***Space Tourism***

**STUDENT PACKET:**

**Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Directions:**

1. As a class,watch the Time Science video called: ***“Space Tourism: Will It Fly?”***(3:35) and take notes on page 2 of this packet.
2. Read the blog titled: ***“Space Tourism”*** on page 3 of this packet.
3. Read the persuasive essay: **“*An-Out-of-This-World Vacation”***on pages 4 – 6 of this packet.

**Your Writing Task:**

**Write an opinion essay on the topic of space tourism. Do you think public space tourism is a good idea? Why or why not?**

In your essay you will be using facts and details from the video, from the blog, and from the persuasive essay to support your opinion with reasons and evidence.

**Video Notes**

**Time Science - *Space Tourism: Will It Fly? (3:35)***

<http://content.time.com/time/video/player/0,32068,1649751671001_2115295,00.html>

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| --- | --- |
| **Major Discussion Points** | **Details** |
| **Types of Current Space Tourism Projects Under Development** | * **Space X Dragon** * **Virgin Galactic Corporation** * **Boeing Bigelow Space Hotel** |
| **Advantages of Space Tourism** |  |
| **Disadvantages of Space Tourism** |  |

**Blog**

***Space Tourism***

Retrieved from [www.macmillanenglish.com/ispiration](http://www.macmillanenglish.com/ispiration)

With less money available for space exploration, governments are seeing private companies funding new projects with money from a new industry: space tourism. But what will the long term consequences be?

Every industry needs people to run it, and if space tourism ‘takes off,’ there will be job opportunities for pilots, cabin attendants, engineers, ground-control staff, and travel agents. Also, much of the money (around $100,000 each) that tourists pay will fund future space exploration.

However, it is not all good news. First, getting a rocket through our atmosphere is dangerous – seven astronauts died in the 1980s space shuttle Challenger tragedy. Second, there is a cost to the environment; burning fuel from rockets will leave huge amounts of carbon on the upper part of our atmosphere. This will stay in the atmosphere and increase global warming.

Space tourism will provide job opportunities and the chance for some people to have the experience of a lifetime. However, unless a safe, clean fuel can be developed, the cost to the environment will probably be too great to sustain the industry in the long term.

**An Out-of-This-World Vacation**

by Alice Leonhardt

Retrieved from *Literacy by Design* Source Book Volume 2 Pages 344 - 348

Forget camping at Yellowstone National Park. Forget visiting a theme park or spending two weeks at the beach. Even forget trips to beautiful spots around the world. The summer vacation of the future will be 60 miles straight up – into space.

Does this sound too “far out” to happen soon? Guess again. In 2001, the first space tourist, Dennis Tito, orbited Earth for ten days. His destination was the International Space Station (ISS). Since then, other people have also made the trip.

Some people think private citizens going into space for pleasure is a waste of time and money. I disagree. I believe space tourism has a bright future. Space tourism makes good business sense. Some companies are willing to put money into building the industry. Some private citizens will pay for the chance to go into space. Space tourism also makes good scientific sense. It will increase people’s interest in space exploration. It will also help develop new tools for use in space. These tools will help advance space exploration.

**Race to Space**

Private companies are racing to build and launch spacecraft. They hope these craft will carry large groups of people. One company is developing a craft that will take off like an airplane. Rocket engines will accelerate the craft to Mach 4 (four times the speed of sound). Then the craft will coast to an altitude of 62 miles. That’s quite a ride!

Another company is building a craft that is carried into the air by a “mothership.” In this design, the small spaceplane is attached to a larger airplane for takeoff. Once the large place has reached high altitude, it will release the spaceplane, which will then rocket into space. Both companies promise their passengers several minutes in space. During that time, they will experience weightlessness and view Earth.

What else does the future hold? Several companies are interested in building space hotels. If spaceplanes can carry tourists to space, why not give them a destination? Even some of the major hotel chains are thinking about space. These companies see the future. They belie in space tourism.

**The Cost of Space Travel**

These companies should believe in space tourism. There are eager customers out there. Some did not even wait for the spacecraft to be finished before signing up. These people paid $200,000 each for a future flight. Granted, $200,000 is pricey. However, it is much less that then $20 million that Dennis Tito paid for his trip.

People involved in space tourism calculate that prices will continue to come down. Eric Anderson is the president of Space Adventures. That is the company that put Dennis Tito in space. Anderson thinks that everyone will be able to afford space travel in 50 years. Perhaps not everyone will be able to travel to space. However, I do think interest will grow. Some predict space tourists will number 15,000 each year by 2021. By then, Anderson believes, people will colonize the Moon. It could become the first outer space hot spot. Fly to the Moon! Now *that’s* a vacation!

**Investing in Space Travel**

Businesses and customers are not the only people who believe the space tourism is important. Congress seems to think so, too. In 2004, Congress passed a bill to help the new industry. The law is the Commercial Space Launch Amendments Act. This law makes it easier for businesses to invest in space travel. The return could be huge. One recent study says that space tourism could be a $1 billion-a-year business by 2021. Space flight is also risky. That is why the law prevents passengers from suing the government. Space tourism companies are required to warn customers of the danger. Early airplane travel was a bit wild. But it got safer. I Think space travel will, too.

NASA does not seem to share this positive view. It puts very little budget money toward public space travel. Because space tourism will grow, those who doubt its importance will be won over. NASA and the public will see how the industry can benefit space exploration.

**Let’s Get Serious**

Space tourism is in its pioneering phase. Prices are high and services are few. But as the demand for travel increases, companies will compete for travelers. They will get lower prices. They will increase services. This will fuel the “space business.” The adventurous will find jobs in space. And the increased revenue from tourism will fund future technology for exploring and developing the resources in space.

Business has always played a major role in moving this country forward. It is time for business to take the lead in space tourism. We must take space tourism seriously. If we do, we can open space travel to anyone who has ever dreamed of a vacation to the Moon and beyond.

**Opinion Essay**

**Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Be sure to revise and edit your work!**