

8 Time travel

Reading 1: Gapped text
FCE Part 2



- Space hotels such as the one in the picture may soon become a reality. What do you think it would be like to stay in one of these? How would you spend your time? What might be some of the drawbacks of being a guest? Would there be any dangers?
- Now read this text about holidays in space, ignoring the gaps. How many of the things you spoke about in exercise 1 are mentioned in the text?

Wish you were here?

Been to Benidorm, Bali and the Greek Isles? Tired of all the typical tourist resorts? Why not treat yourself to a holiday in space?

In just a few years from now your local travel agent may well try to tempt you in this way into taking a short break in a futuristic space hotel, with the chance to look down on all the sights of our planet from over 60 miles up.

1 Now, at the start of the new millennium, it is beginning to become a reality. With the first short commercial passenger flights into space already fully booked, private companies are now turning their attention to holidaymakers wanting to spend longer periods of time outside the Earth's atmosphere. Tourists will soon be preparing to stay for several days in an orbiting space hotel, such as the one designed by American construction company, Gerard and Burns.

The hotel will rotate as it orbits the Earth every 90 minutes, resulting in weightlessness at its centre and 20 per cent of normal gravity in all other areas.

2 Mark Levy of Gerard and Burns says: 'We are currently working out what experiences we can provide for the 200 guests which the hotel will accommodate – a 30-minute space walk, for example, or maybe one day an optional trip orbiting the Moon.' 3

Before that can happen engineers have to develop safe and low-cost spacecraft to transport us there. NASA has already invested a billion dollars in a project to build a reusable space vehicle. 4 One such company, Dream Ships of California, is about to start building its Cosmos Freeway hypersonic aircraft, which will be capable of travelling at Mach 10 at a height of 65 miles and able to fly from New York to London in 20 minutes.



Don't forget!

- Before reading sentences A–H, try to predict the general content of each gap. After the first gap, *Now, at the start of the new millennium ...* probably contrasts with some time in the past mentioned in the missing sentence. Similarly, *...it is beginning to become a reality* suggests that the missing sentence talks about space hotels as previously being no more than a vision or fantasy.
- When making your choices, look for connections between the language in the missing sentences and the language in the text, both before and after the gap.

3 Read the following instructions for this Part 3 Reading task.

Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A–H** the one which fits each gap (1–7). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

- A** He also foresees games played in weightless conditions including 'zero-gravity basketball' and 'air tennis'.
- B** And everyone will notice the effects of space adaptation syndrome, which affects one's sense of direction and causes bodily fluids to move towards the head.
- C** Not so long ago the idea of space travel for all was just a dream.
- D** So book your tickets now.
- E** This lack of space is not the only discomfort the first guests will have to put up with.
- F** And more than a dozen small private companies in the US and Europe are racing to do the same.
- G** It will probably take some two years to assemble and fit out the hotel, which is expected to travel about 200 miles above the planet.
- H** But there are one or two potential problems which might make people think twice before heading for space.

Reacting to the text

Would you like to spend a few nights in a space hotel, or have the potential problems put you off? What other unusual types of holiday do you think will exist in the future?

Noticing language: Phrasal verbs

Each of the following sentences from the reading text contains a phrasal verb. Match each phrasal verb in **bold** to a word or expression in the box with a similar meaning.

go towards	compensate for
tolerate	think about and plan
provide with everything that will be needed	

- We are currently **working out** what experiences we can provide for the 200 guests.
- The view will definitely **make up for** the drawbacks.
- This lack of space is not the only discomfort the first guests will have to **put up with**.
- It will probably take some two years to assemble and **fit out** the hotel.
- But there are one or two potential problems which might make people think twice before **heading for** space.