

DAD, MOM ... I WANT TO BE AN ASTRONAUT!



Have you ever wondered how to become an astronaut? How do they live in space? What do they eat? How do they use the bathroom? You've probably never even thought about it; so, pay attention to what I'm going to tell you.

The astronaut's missions in space can last days, weeks, months and even up to a year. To be an astronaut, you must study hard, speak several languages and be in good health.

Training for astronauts is, usually, done in a swimming pool. This is because the weightlessness in space is like floating in water. This creates a feeling similar to the one felt in space by astronauts.



The first astronaut to make a trip in space was a Russian named Yuri Gagarin. He traveled in 1961 aboard a ship named the Vostok 1. It only took 108 minutes to fly around our planet at more than 27,000 km/hr. After Gagarin, many other astronauts from different nationalities have made additional space trips.

When making a trip in space, it is important to have a good set of fire-retardant suits. These suits allow the astronaut to go out into space while completely protecting the body from the extreme temperatures that can be found in space. At the space station, the Russian made Orlan suit, allows astronauts to be outside the station for more than 7 hours without suffering any health problems.

Meals are varied and meet all nutritional needs. They are, usually, packaged in a dehydrated form, so the food does not lose its properties or its original flavor.



Astronauts wash with damp cloths each day to stay clean. They do not take showers because the water is carefully rationed. They only have the water they have brought from Earth which they need for drinking.

When the expeditions are shorter, they wear diapers for when they need to use the bathroom. If they are going for a longer time, they have specially designed bathrooms that work in zero gravity. These work like giant vacuum cleaners and are powerful enough to absorb all the waste produced.

And now I ask you ... Do you want to be an astronaut?



ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

1. What does the word "fire-retardant" mean in the text?

- A. Leaks easily
- B. Can be used in space
- C. Helps astronauts
- D. Protects against extreme temperatures



2. Meals in space tasted bad because _____

- A. They are not cooked at that time.
- B. That statement is false
- C. They do not have the necessary nutrients.
- D. They come dehydrated.

3. What do the astronauts use damp cloths for?

- A. To bath
- B. To clean
- C. To freshen up
- D. Both Option A and Option B are correct.



4. How long did Yuri Gagarin take to fly around our planet?

- A. More than one hour
- B. Three hours
- C. Almost two hours
- D. A whole week

5. The water on the ship is used to_____.

- A. get a shower
- B. drink
- C. play
- D. cook

6. Would you would like to be an astronaut when you are older?

Why or why not.

7. Design your own space suit and draw it. Include and describe it's characteristics.
