

# WORLD SPACE WEEK



## Reading Text

### Step one

Before you read, in your groups discuss these three questions and make some notes:

1. Have you ever heard of World Space Week?
2. What do you think it is?
3. What activities do you think happen in World Space Week?

### Step two

Look briefly at the text and see how accurate your answers were. Discuss the text and your answers in your group.

## World Space Week

In December 1999, the United Nations announced that World Space Week would be held every year from 4-10 October. Each year there are almost 3,000 events in over eighty countries held during World Space Week.

The theme for 2017 is “Exploring New Worlds in Space” and it is hoped that more events than ever will be held to celebrate what the United Nations says are “the contributions of space science and technology to the betterment of the human condition”.

These dates of 4-10 October were chosen to commemorate two events:

- October 4, 1957: the launching of the first satellite, Sputnik 1
- October 10, 1967: the signing of the ‘Treaty on Principles Governing the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space’. This agreement helps ensure space exploration is a peaceful activity.

Some of the aims of World Space Week are:

- to educate young people and adults about space science and the benefits we get from it
- to encourage the use of space for sustainable economic development
- to encourage public support for space exploration programmes
- to encourage young people to study the so-called STEM subjects of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics and to explore aerospace careers
- to develop international co-operation on space projects
- to allow countries to display their peaceful uses of space and space technologies.



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Most of the events in the week are organised by space agencies, aerospace companies, schools, planetariums, museums and astronomy clubs around the world. Some of the events are large and complex, while others are much simpler.

For example for World Space Week 2017 in Estonia, scientists from Tartu Observatory will visit elementary and high schools to give a talk about astronomy and space; while in Tampa, USA, The Museum of Science and Industry will host an afternoon with former NASA astronaut Story Musgrave who'll be sharing his experiences from his four spacewalks.

A much larger event for 2017 will be in Port Harcourt, Nigeria with a three-day symposium to bring together space enthusiasts, students and young professionals to discuss the opportunities space programmes offer young people. Expected speakers include engineers and scientists from across Africa, some of whom worked on the Nigeria Edusat-1 satellite. There will also be workshops, films and classes including Lego robotics and telescope-making.

However, not everyone agrees that space exploration is a positive thing. Many people around the world believe that the money that is invested in space exploration and similar projects could be used more effectively, for example in building schools and hospitals, or on projects to support developing countries. World Space Week exists to help people understand the benefits of space science and the aerospace industries, but the arguments about the best use of these large amounts of money will probably continue.

**Source:** World Space Week - [www.worldspaceweek.org](http://www.worldspaceweek.org)

## Step three

In groups look at these five questions and discuss if you know some or all of the answers.

Now read the text again to answer the questions. Some of the answers will need you to think outside of the text.

1. World Space Week is held every two years, is this correct?
2. What is the main aim of World Space Week in terms of space exploration?
3. World Space Week wants to encourage peaceful uses of space technology. Can you think of any non-peaceful uses of space technology?
4. World Space Week is an international event – is it well-known in your country?
5. Which age range does World Space Week seem to be aimed at?

