

Listening (Script)

Now you will hear a text about Burt Rutan. For items **1-10**, choose the best option (**A, B, C or D**), for items **11-15**, choose if the statements are **True (T) or False (F)**. You will hear the text twice.

Now you have 90 seconds to look through the items.

[pause **90 seconds**]

Now we begin.

Airplane designer Burt Rutan was 14 years old when the USSR launched Sputnik 1. He believed that government research into space travel would someday mean he too would be able to journey to space. By the mid-1990s, however, Rutan had realized that waiting for the government wasn't going to work.

It was then that he resolved to build his own spaceship. "If my dream was going to come true – of floating weightless in the black sky and being thrilled by the sight of earth from outside our atmosphere – I'd have to get things started myself," said Rutan.

Rutan was encouraged to build his own spaceship by the history of airplane design itself. Five years after the Wright brothers' first flight in 1903, the airplane was still just a dangerous curiosity. Only a dozen or so people had tried flying in an airplane. Yet by 1912 hundreds of pilots had flown airplanes of different designs that were developed through private enterprise. The bad designs crashed, the good designed flew. Soon, factories in France, England and Germany were producing hundreds and then thousands of airplanes a year. "Why? I believe the answer lay in two observations: "That's gotta be fun" and "Maybe" I can do that," says Rutan.

Rutan's optimism finally paid off. In 2004 his specially designed spaceship, SpaceShipOne, successfully entered space and made it back to earth twice in two weeks. Those were requirements to win ten-million-dollar Ansari X Prize, a prize designed to encourage the development of private space travel. Rutan's success got the world's attention and various schemes to commercialize private space travel began to appear.

In one such scheme, Sir Richard Branson has licensed the technology of SpaceShipOne for his company, Virgin Galactic, which hopes to offer people of all shapes, sizes and ages the opportunity to visit space. Virgin's first spaceships will have two pilots and six passengers aboard. Passengers will float weightless in space for six thrilling minutes as they gaze out the space through a large window. "Of all the things we've done," Branson says, "Virgin Galactic is the one I'm most excited about. Every time I look up in the sky at night, I think about how incredible the opportunity is. People have been waiting for this moment for thousands of years."

Now listen to the text again.

[Text repeated.]

Now you have 14 minutes to complete the task and transfer your answers into the answer sheet.

This is the end of the Listening task.