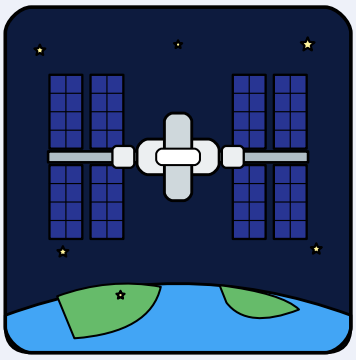
Living on the Space Station

Name: _____ Date: _____



About 250 miles above Earth, a spacecraft the size of a football field races around the planet at roughly 17,500 miles per hour. It is the International Space Station, or ISS, and people have lived on board without a break since November 2000. Astronauts from the United States, Russia, Japan, Canada and Europe take turns living there, usually for about six months at a time.

Because the station circles Earth about every 90 minutes, the crew sees around 16 sunrises and 16 sunsets every day. So astronauts follow a schedule based on clocks, not on the sun.

Life in microgravity is strange. Everything floats, including people, so astronauts sleep in sleeping bags attached to the walls. Food comes in pouches, and drinks are sipped through straws. Water is precious, so the station cleans and recycles most of it, even the moisture from the crew's breath and sweat.

Floating may sound fun, but it is hard on the body. Without gravity pulling on them, muscles and bones grow weaker. To stay healthy, astronauts exercise about two hours every day on a treadmill, a bike and a special weight machine.

Much of the crew's time goes to science. They study how plants grow, how flames behave and how the human body changes in space. These experiments help plan longer journeys to the moon and Mars.

1 HOW? **How often does the ISS circle Earth?**

about every 90 minutes | once a day | once a week

2 WHY? **Why do astronauts exercise about two hours a day?**

Without gravity, muscles and bones grow weaker. | They are training for a race.

3 **Draw a line from each word to its meaning.**

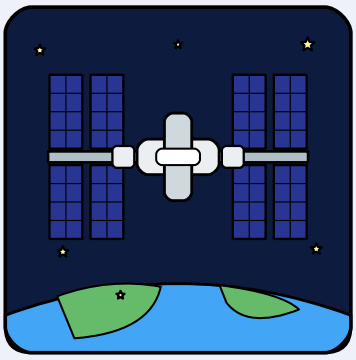
microgravity	a plan for when things happen
recycle	a test to learn something new
schedule	to clean and use something again
experiment	a place where things seem weightless

4 MAIN IDEA **What is the main idea of the passage? Use your own words.**

_____

Living on the Space Station

Answer Key



About 250 miles above Earth, a spacecraft the size of a football field races around the planet at roughly 17,500 miles per hour. It is the International Space Station, or ISS, and people have lived on board without a break since November 2000. Astronauts from the United States, Russia, Japan, Canada and Europe take turns living there, usually for about six months at a time.

Because the station circles Earth about every 90 minutes, the crew sees around 16 sunrises and 16 sunsets every day. So astronauts follow a schedule based on clocks, not on the sun.

Life in microgravity is strange. Everything floats, including people, so astronauts sleep in sleeping bags attached to the walls. Food comes in pouches, and drinks are sipped through straws. Water is precious, so the station cleans and recycles most of it, even the moisture from the crew's breath and sweat.

Floating may sound fun, but it is hard on the body. Without gravity pulling on them, muscles and bones grow weaker. To stay healthy, astronauts exercise about two hours every day on a treadmill, a bike and a special weight machine.

Much of the crew's time goes to science. They study how plants grow, how flames behave and how the human body changes in space. These experiments help plan longer journeys to the moon and Mars.

1 HOW? **How often does the ISS circle Earth?**

(about every 90 minutes) once a day once a week

2 WHY? **Why do astronauts exercise about two hours a day?**

(Without gravity, muscles and bones grow weaker.) They are training for a race.

3 **Draw a line from each word to its meaning.**

microgravity	a plan for when things happen
recycle	a test to learn something new
schedule	to clean and use something again
experiment	a place where things seem weightless

4 MAIN IDEA **What is the main idea of the passage? Use your own words.**

Living and working on the space station is very different from life on Earth.