

## One giant leap

One giant leap by one crazy 43-year-old Austrian recently made worldwide headline news. Felix Baumgartner became the first man to break the sound barrier, without mechanical help, after he jumped from 39,045 metres (128,100 feet, more than 39 km, or more than 24 miles) up in space. He has thus achieved one of the most remarkable feats man can accomplish. The Austrian daredevil made his daring leap high above Roswell, New Mexico, USA.

Once weather conditions were right, Mr Baumgartner took off in a purpose built capsule that was suspended under a giant helium filled balloon. It took him to 39,045 metres. The jump was broadcast around the world using video cameras. They showed him looking down at the earth from the capsule. Just before he stepped off it he addressed the world, who was watching him. He ended his short speech by saying, "I'm going over". The Austrian then saluted the world then jumped into space.

His leap was being closely watched by Mission Control down below. There was alarm when he went into a spin but he managed to overcome this. As he plummeted towards the earth below Mr Baumgartner reached speeds of Mach 1.24 or 1,342 kph (833.9 mph). He became the first man to reach supersonic speed without travelling in a jet or a spacecraft. Only the last few thousand feet were negotiated by parachute.

Felix Baumgartner landed safely in a field in New Mexico nine minutes or so after jumping, touching down as if he had just stepped off a bus! Falling to his knees he raised his fists in triumph. Helicopter recovery teams were on hand moments later. His family and friends from Austria, who had travelled to America to watch the event, could then cheer and celebrate as it became clear he was alright. His achievement meant he beat the previous record, set by Joseph Kittinger's jump in 1960, of 102,799 feet.

More than eight million people watched the event live on YouTube, making it the most simultaneous live view on the channel to date. Researchers from the Red Bull Stratos Project said the jump has provided invaluable data for the development of high-performance, high altitude parachute systems.

**Category: Space / Skydiving / Austrian**  
**Level: Intermediate / Upper intermediate**

This ESL lesson is the copyright of [www.newsflashenglish.com](http://www.newsflashenglish.com)

## EXERCISES

1. **Skydiving:** Think of three things you know about skydiving. Go round the room swapping details with others.

2. **Dictation:** The teacher will read four to six lines of the article slowly and clearly. Students will write down what they hear. The teacher will repeat the passage slowly again. Self-correct your work from page one - filling in spaces and correcting mistakes. Be honest with yourself on the number of errors. Advise the teacher of your total number of errors. Less than five is very good. Ten is acceptable. Any more is room for improvement! More than twenty - you need to do some work!

3. **Reading:** The students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

4. **Vocabulary:** Students should now look through the article and underline any vocabulary they do not know. Look in dictionaries. Discuss and help each other out. The teacher will go through and explain any unknown words or phrases.

5. **The article:** Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- a) What is the article about?
- b) What do you think about the article?
- c) Was this an easy or hard article to understand?

6. **Geography:** Where is Roswell, New Mexico, USA? Draw a map on the board then **look on Google maps** to help you.

7. **One giant leap:** In pairs think of five interesting places one could leap from in order to skydive. Then add five different types of equipment you might use doing it. Write them below. What type of training might you undertake? Discuss together.

Places to leap from	Equipment you might take with you
1 _____	1 _____
2 _____	2 _____
3 _____	3 _____
4 _____	4 _____
5 _____	5 _____

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

8. **Let's think!** In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with **One giant leap**. *One-two minutes*. Compare with other teams. Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

9. **Let's roleplay 1:** In pairs. You are in bar in New Mexico. Start a conversation about: *Felix Baumgartner – One giant leap*. *5-minutes*.

One giant leap – 15<sup>th</sup> October 2012

**10. Let's roleplay 2:** In groups. One of you is the interviewer. The others are one of the following people. You are in the *Discussion FM* radio studio. Today's interview is about: *One giant leap – Felix Baumgartner*.

1	Felix Baumgartner
2	A member of Mission Control
2	A member of his family who watched the leap
4	A YouTube spokesperson

**The teacher** will choose some groups to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

**11. Let's do 'The Article Quiz':** Have the students quiz each other in pairs. They score a point for each correct answer and half a point each time they have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

**Student A**

- 1) Name the skydiver.
- 2) What is the skydiver's nationality?
- 3) What height did the skydiver jump from?
- 4) What speed did he reach?
- 5) Where did the sky dive take place?

**Student B**

- 1) What country did the sky diver land in?
- 2) Where did the skydiver land?
- 3) How many people watched on YouTube?
- 4) What did the skydiver do on landing?
- 5) What did the researchers say?

**12. YouTube:** With your partner talk about YouTube. What is it? *5 minutes*

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to explain their findings in front of the class.

**13. Roswell:** In pairs, or as a group/class - think of six things about Roswell. Write them below. Discuss together. What are your conclusions?

1 _____	4 _____
2 _____	5 _____
3 _____	6 _____

**The teacher** will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class

**14. One giant leap...** You and your partner are about to skydive separately to earth from space. Discuss the training you have done. Before you go into space in your capsule together what do you think lies ahead for you. How you do feel? *5 minutes*.

**15. Let's write an e-mail:** Write and send a 200 word e-mail to your teacher about: ***One giant leap***. Your e-mail can be read out in class.

**16. Sentence starters:** Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- a) One giant leap \_\_\_\_\_
- b) YouTube \_\_\_\_\_
- c) The Austrian \_\_\_\_\_

## DISCUSSION

### Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) Would you like to visit Roswell?
- 3) Would you like to skydive? Explain.
- 4) What is the craziest thing you have done?
- 5) Is Mr Baumgartner crazy by doing what he did?
- 6) Do you know of any other skydivers?
- 7) Did you watch the jump?
- 8) Do you watch YouTube? Explain
- 9) Why is YouTube so popular?
- 10) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?

### Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you have read?
- 2) Do you think aliens are kept at Roswell?
- 3) Why was this jump important?
- 4) Why do we hold so much interest in space?
- 5) Have you ever been in a spin?
- 6) What is Mission Control?
- 7) Have you ever watched TV footage of man on the moon?
- 8) What is next for man in space?
- 9) How do you think the jump went?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

## SPEAKING

Let's discuss! One giant leap

*Allow 10-15 minutes – As a class / small groups / pairs / 1 to 1*

<p>Talk about "One giant leap" What does it mean?</p>
---

The teacher can moderate the session.

## GAP FILL: READING

*Put the words into the gaps in the text.*

### One giant leap

One (1)\_\_\_\_\_ leap by one (2)\_\_\_\_\_ 43-year-old Austrian recently made worldwide headline news. Felix Baumgartner became the first man to break the sound (3)\_\_\_\_\_, without mechanical help, after he jumped from 39,045 metres (128,100 feet, more than 39 km, or more than 24 miles) up in space. He has thus achieved one of the most remarkable feats man can accomplish. The Austrian (4)\_\_\_\_\_ made his daring leap high above Roswell, New Mexico, USA.

Once weather conditions were right, Mr Baumgartner took off in a purpose built capsule that was suspended under a giant helium filled balloon. It took him to 39,045 metres. The (5)\_\_\_\_\_ was broadcast around the world using video cameras. They showed him looking down at the (6)\_\_\_\_\_ from the (7)\_\_\_\_\_. Just before he stepped off it he addressed the world, who was watching him. He ended his short speech by saying, "I'm going over". The Austrian then saluted the world then jumped into (8)\_\_\_\_\_.

His leap was being closely watched by Mission Control down below. There was alarm when he went into a (1)\_\_\_\_\_ but he managed to overcome this. As he plummeted towards the earth below Mr Baumgartner reached speeds of Mach 1.24 or 1,342 kph (833.9 mph). He became the first man to reach (2)\_\_\_\_\_ speed without travelling in a (3)\_\_\_\_\_ or a spacecraft. Only the last few thousand feet were negotiated by parachute.

Felix Baumgartner landed safely in a (4)\_\_\_\_\_ in New Mexico nine minutes or so after jumping, touching down as if he had just stepped off a bus! Falling to his (5)\_\_\_\_\_ he raised his (6)\_\_\_\_\_ in triumph. Helicopter recovery teams were on hand moments later. His family and friends from Austria, who had travelled to America to watch the event, could then (7)\_\_\_\_\_ and celebrate as it became clear he was alright. His achievement meant he beat the (8)\_\_\_\_\_ record, set by Joseph Kittinger's jump in 1960, of 102,799 feet.

*earth*

*crazy*

*jump*

*barrier*

*space*

*capsule*

*daredevil*

*giant*

*knees*

*cheer*

*spin*

*previous*

*supersonic*

*jet*

*fists*

*field*

## GAP FILL: LISTENING

*Listen and fill in the spaces.*

### One giant leap

\_\_\_\_\_ crazy 43-year-old Austrian recently made worldwide headline news. Felix Baumgartner became the first man to break the sound barrier, \_\_\_\_\_, after he jumped from 39,045 metres (128,100 feet, more than 39 km, or more than 24 miles) up in space. He has thus achieved one of the most remarkable feats man can accomplish. The \_\_\_\_\_ made his daring leap high above Roswell, New Mexico, USA.

Once weather conditions were right, Mr Baumgartner took off in a purpose built capsule that was suspended under a giant helium filled balloon. It took him to 39,045 metres. The jump was broadcast around the world \_\_\_\_\_. They showed him looking down at the earth from the capsule. Just before he stepped off it he addressed the world, who was watching him. He ended his short speech by saying, "\_\_\_\_\_". The Austrian then saluted the world \_\_\_\_\_.

His leap was being closely watched by Mission Control down below. There was alarm when \_\_\_\_\_ but he managed to overcome this. As he plummeted towards the earth below Mr Baumgartner reached speeds of Mach 1.24 or 1,342 kph (833.9 mph). He became the first man to reach \_\_\_\_\_ without travelling in a jet or a spacecraft. Only the last few thousand feet were \_\_\_\_\_.

Felix Baumgartner landed safely in a field in New Mexico nine minutes or so after jumping, touching down as if he had just \_\_\_\_\_! Falling to his knees he raised his fists in triumph. Helicopter recovery teams were on hand moments later. His family and friends from Austria, who had travelled to America to watch the event, could then \_\_\_\_\_ as it became clear he was alright. His achievement meant he beat \_\_\_\_\_, set by Joseph Kittinger's jump in 1960, of 102,799 feet.

## GRAMMAR

Put the words into the gaps in the text.

### One giant leap

One giant leap by one crazy 43-year-old Austrian recently made worldwide headline news. Felix Baumgartner became the first man to break the sound barrier, without mechanical help, after he jumped (1)\_\_\_ 39,045 metres (128,100 feet, (2)\_\_\_ than 39 km, or more than 24 miles) up in space. He has (3)\_\_\_ achieved one of the most remarkable feats man can accomplish. The Austrian daredevil made his daring leap high above Roswell, New Mexico, USA.

Once weather conditions were right, Mr Baumgartner took off in a purpose built capsule (4)\_\_\_ was suspended under a giant helium filled balloon. It took him to 39,045 metres. The jump was broadcast around the world using video cameras. (5)\_\_\_ showed him looking down at the earth from the capsule. (6)\_\_\_ before he stepped off it he addressed the world, who was watching him. He ended his short speech by saying, "I'm going over". The Austrian (7)\_\_\_ saluted the world then jumped (8)\_\_\_ space.

His leap was being closely watched (1)\_\_\_ Mission Control down below. There was alarm when he went into a spin but he managed to overcome this. As he plummeted towards the earth below Mr Baumgartner reached speeds of Mach 1.24 or 1,342 kph (833.9 mph). He became the first man to reach supersonic speed without travelling in a jet or a spacecraft. Only the last few thousand feet were negotiated by parachute.

Felix Baumgartner landed safely in a field (2)\_\_\_ New Mexico nine minutes (3)\_\_\_ so after jumping, touching down as (4)\_\_\_ he had just stepped off (5)\_\_\_ bus! Falling to his knees (6)\_\_\_ raised his fists in triumph. Helicopter recovery teams were on hand moments later. His family and friends from Austria, who had travelled to America to watch the event, could then cheer and celebrate as (7)\_\_\_ became clear he was alright. His achievement meant he beat the previous record, set by Joseph Kittinger's jump in 1960, (8)\_\_\_ 102,799 feet.

**just**

**then**

**more**

**into**

**thus**

**that**

**from**

**they**

**of**

**if**

**a**

**it**

**or**

**by**

**in**

**he**

## SPELLING TEST

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards, check your answers with your teacher, using the following ratings: **Pass = 12, Good = 15, Very good = 18, Excellent = 20**

1	capsule	11	remarkable
2	weather	12	leap
3	crazy	13	accomplish
4	helium	14	daredevil
5	balloon	15	worldwide
6	overcome	16	simultaneous
7	supersonic	17	headline
8	achievement	18	mechanical
9	triumph	19	thus
10	parachute	20	knees

### LINKS

<http://www.youtube.com/redbull>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felix\\_Baumgartner](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felix_Baumgartner)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=audZVa2OxcM>

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/space/9608548/Felix-Baumgartner-profile-of-the-Austrian-skydiver-who-broke-sound-barrier.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-19943590>

### ANSWERS

GAP FILL: One giant leap: One **giant** leap by one **crazy** 43-year-old Austrian recently made worldwide headline news. Felix Baumgartner became the first man to break the sound **barrier**, without mechanical help, after he jumped from 39,045 metres (128,100 feet, more than 39 km, or more than 24 miles) up in space. He has thus achieved one of the most remarkable feats man can accomplish. The Austrian **daredevil** made his daring leap high above Roswell, New Mexico, USA.

Once weather conditions were right, Mr Baumgartner took off in a purpose built capsule that was suspended under a giant helium filled balloon. It took him to 39,045 metres. The **jump** was broadcast around the world using video cameras. They showed him looking down at the **earth** from the **capsule**. Just before he stepped off it he addressed the world, who was watching him. He ended his short speech by saying, "I'm going over". The Austrian then saluted the world then jumped into **space**.

His leap was being closely watched by Mission Control down below. There was alarm when he went into a **spin** but he managed to overcome this. As he plummeted towards the earth below Mr Baumgartner reached speeds of Mach 1.24 or 1,342 kph (833.9 mph). He became the first man to reach **supersonic** speed without travelling in a **jet** or a spacecraft. Only the last few thousand feet were negotiated by parachute.

Felix Baumgartner landed safely in a **field** in New Mexico nine minutes or so after jumping, touching down as if he had just stepped off a bus! Falling to his **knees** he raised his **fists** in triumph. Helicopter recovery teams were on hand moments later. His family and friends from Austria, who had travelled to America to watch the event, could then **cheer** and celebrate as it became clear he was alright. His achievement meant he beat the **previous** record, set by Joseph Kittinger's jump in 1960, of 102,799 feet. (V2)

[www.newsflashenglish.com](http://www.newsflashenglish.com)

Created by **David Robinson**. This ESL lesson is the copyright of [www.newsflashenglish.com](http://www.newsflashenglish.com)