

Mother-Daughter Duo Makes History in Space

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. milestone (noun) /'maɪlstəʊn/: A significant event, achievement, or stage in the development or progress of something, often marked by its importance or impact.
Example: Graduating from college was a major milestone in her life.
2. duo (noun) /'duːʊ/: A pair of individuals or things working together, often in collaboration or partnership.
Example: The musical duo performed a memorable duet on stage.
3. promptly (adverb) /'prɒptli/: In a punctual or timely manner, without delay.
Example: Please arrive promptly at the meeting to start on time.
4. altitude (noun) /'æltɪtʊd/: The height above sea level or the earth's surface, often measured in feet or meters.
Example: The plane reached its cruising altitude of 30,000 feet.
5. distinction (noun) /dɪ'stɪŋkʃən/: A recognition of excellence, uniqueness, or superiority that sets someone or something apart from others.
Example: The award highlighted her distinction as a leading scientist.
6. convey (verb) /kən'veɪ/: To communicate or express information, thoughts, or feelings to others, often through words, actions, or gestures.
Example: He used art to convey his emotions and ideas to the audience.



Two competition winners from the Caribbean have achieved a historic **milestone** by becoming the first mother and daughter **duo** to travel into space together. Anastasia Mayers and her mother, Keisha Shahaff, boarded on the Virgin Galactic 02 mission that launched from New Mexico on August 10. Notably, 18-year-old Mayers, a university student, is one of the youngest individuals to journey into space.

Shahaff earned the tickets for this extraordinary trip after participating in a competition during a Virgin Atlantic flight from Antigua to London. Upon discovering that she had won two tickets, she **promptly** invited her daughter to join her on this unique adventure.

The mission, which carried four passengers and two pilots, reached an **altitude** of approximately 85 kilometers above Earth's surface. This flight marked Virgin Galactic's second commercial space mission, and it was the first to include paying customers.

Once the VSS Unity spacecraft had reached approximately 80 kilometers in altitude, the passengers on board were treated to moments of weightlessness and breathtaking views of Earth through the ship's 17 windows. Flights aboard the VSS Unity typically last around 90 minutes, with ticket prices reaching up to \$450,000 per person.

In addition to being the first mother-daughter team in space, Mayers and Shahaff hold the **distinction** of being the first individuals from the Caribbean to travel into space. Mayers **conveyed** a powerful message: "I want people to know that it doesn't matter where you come from, who you are — anything — your dream is your dream, and you can make that happen, despite what anyone else says," she shared with the BBC.

Despite Mayers not having completed her studies at Scotland's University of Aberdeen, Virgin Galactic emphasized in a tweet that "curiosity is the single most important qualification you need to be a part of the next era of space travel." Alongside the mother and daughter, former British Olympic canoeist Jon Goodwin also joined this remarkable spaceflight.

DISCUSSION

1. If you had the opportunity to go to space, who would you want to accompany you on the journey, and why?
2. Imagine you're on a space adventure like Anastatia Mayers and Keisha Shahaff. What kind of special memories and experiences would you hope to have in space?
3. Space travel is becoming more accessible to civilians. How do you think this will impact our future and the way we view space exploration?
4. If you could look out of a spaceship's window and see Earth from space, what do you think would be the most breathtaking sight?
5. The cost of space tourism is currently very high. Do you think space travel will ever become more affordable for ordinary people? How might that change the world?
6. What advice would you give to young people like Anastatia Mayers who dream of going to space one day?
7. If you could choose any destination in space to visit, whether a planet, moon, or celestial object, where would you want to go, and what would you hope to discover or experience there?