Name: _____ Date: _____

# Sleepover in Space

Reading level 8 (4th grade) · 338 words

Every Friday at bedtime, Eli sat on his bed with a tablet and called his Aunt Jo. Aunt Jo was an astronaut, and tonight she was calling from the International Space Station, high above the Earth. Outside Eli's window the stars were out.

Her face popped up on the screen. Her hair floated around her head like a dark cloud. "Hi, Eli!" she said. She waved, and her whole body drifted backward. "Why are you floating?" Eli asked, and he laughed so hard that he almost dropped the tablet.

"Everything on the space station floats," said Aunt Jo. "It is weightless in here." She let go of a pen, and it hung in the air between them. Then she held up her dinner, and a spoon drifted slowly away across the room.

"Food floats too," she said, and she caught a blob of juice in her mouth. "We exercise every day. Space makes our muscles and bones weaker." She pretended to lift a very heavy weight, and her arms wobbled. Eli giggled.

"Now come and see my bedroom," said Aunt Jo. She pulled herself along a handrail until she reached a small cabin. Inside hung a sleeping bag. "We sleep in sleeping bags up here," she said, and she zipped herself in.

"Want to see something amazing?" Aunt Jo floated to the Cupola, a part of the station with seven windows. Outside, the blue Earth turned slowly, with white clouds swirling across it. "I see sixteen sunrises and sixteen sunsets every day," she said.

Eli pressed his nose against the tablet. The Earth looked so small and so bright. "Is my house down there?" he asked. "Somewhere," said Aunt Jo, "right under that cloud." She blew him a kiss, and the picture went dark.

Eli lay back and looked at his ceiling. His own bed felt heavy and warm, and the house was quiet all around him. "Goodnight, Aunt Jo," he whispered. High above him, she was floating in her sleeping bag, ready to see the next sunrise.

## Questions

**1. Who was Eli calling?**

A. His teacher
B. His Aunt Jo
C. His dad

**2. Where did Aunt Jo sleep?**

A. On a chair
B. In a bed
C. In a sleeping bag

**3. How many sunrises does she see each day?**

A. Sixteen
B. One
C. Two

**4. Why did the pen hang in the air?**

A. It was magic
B. Aunt Jo threw it
C. Things float on the space station

**5. Why does Aunt Jo exercise?**

A. She is bored
B. Space makes muscles weaker
C. She wants to win

**6. What does "drifted" mean?**

A. Floated slowly
B. Ran fast
C. Fell down

## Words to know

astronaut: a person who travels in space
weightless: feeling no weight
drifted: floated slowly
handrail: a bar to hold
exercise: moving to stay strong
sunrise: when the sun comes up

# Answer key: Sleepover in Space

1. B. His Aunt Jo
2. C. In a sleeping bag
3. A. Sixteen
4. C. Things float on the space station
5. B. Space makes muscles weaker
6. A. Floated slowly