A photograph of an astronaut in a white spacesuit working on the International Space Station. The astronaut is positioned in the center-right of the frame, reaching towards a piece of equipment. The background shows the complex structure of the station and the Earth's surface below. The image is overlaid with a blue gradient on the left side.

Q & A with Deborah Lee Rose,
author of
Astronauts Zoom!

Published by Persnickety Press/WunderMill Books, 2021
In celebration of 20 years of astronauts living and
working on the International Space Station

Victor Glover

Reading
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until every child reads

Q

Can you start by sharing a special fun fact about your new book *Astronauts Zoom!*?

A

Fun fact: Even if you turn *Astronauts Zoom!* upside down, the photos from inside and outside the International Space Station will still be correct! That's because after astronauts adapt to being on the space station, they can do everything they need to do "right side up" or "upside down" or in between.



Jack "2Fish" Fischer



Q Who are the astronauts in the book?

A *Astronauts Zoom!* has 38 different women and men astronauts. They are scientists, engineers, doctors and pilots. You can find all their names, and the countries they're from, in the back of the book. And you can learn more about each one of them at [nasa.gov](https://www.nasa.gov).



Sunita Williams, US (left); Joan Higginbotham, US (right)



Q

Why do astronauts wear spacesuits?

A

Take a look at the G and H pages in the book. Astronauts need to wear their full spacesuits when they spacewalk. A spacesuit is like a one-person spacecraft that protects an astronaut from both the cold of space and the heat of the Sun. One thing that helps astronauts stay warm during a spacewalk is fingertip warmers in their gloves! Or when solar rays make them too hot, astronauts pull their gold-coated visors over the face part of their helmets. Under their spacesuits, they wear special clothing with tubes that let water flow around their bodies to keep them cool.

Q

What do astronauts see when they look down at the Earth?

A

Even from inside the station, astronauts can see whole countries, and the longest rivers and the highest mountains. Through huge windows, which together are known as the cupola, astronauts can even watch a full hurricane forming. You can see that too when you look at the V W X pages in the book. What astronauts see from space is so awesome, it can change their lives forever. This has a special name—the Overview Effect.

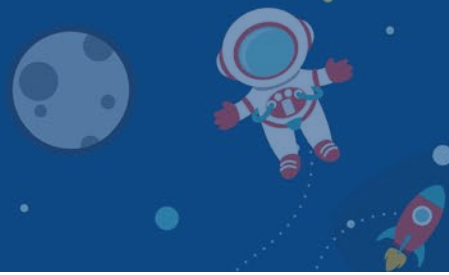
Q

When do astronauts exercise, and have fun?

A

Take a look at the E page in the book. Astronauts must exercise every day for two hours, to keep their muscles and bones strong. Having fun is part of their schedule too. Just like people on Earth, astronauts need breaks from all the work they do. The book shows lots of ways they have fun, like juggling or kicking soccer balls on the J and K pages.





Q

How do astronauts practice on Earth for what they will do in space?

A

Astronauts train a long time on Earth before their space missions. One way they prepare for living and working in space is by practicing in a giant pool on Earth. The pool has a special practice model of the International Space Station under the water. You can see astronauts training in the book's backmatter.



Timothy Peake, UK



Q

Where do astronauts sleep on the space station?

A

Check out the Z page in the book. Astronauts sleep zipped into their sleeping bags so they won't float out! When there are a lot of astronauts on the space station at one time, some astronauts sleep in their regular sleeping compartments, but others can sleep even where the spacesuits are stored.

Q

***Astronauts Zoom!* has so many action words. How did you choose all the verbs?**

A

I wanted to use action words that are part of kids' lives, like "play" and "exercise." I also wanted high energy words, like "juggle" and "kick"—these are words you don't usually think about in terms of astronauts. And I definitely wanted to use the word "read" because astronauts need to read a lot, and I love to read!

Q

How did you find all the astronaut photos?

A

NASA.gov is an amazing resource for photos. I wanted pictures that told stories, with lots of color and even funny details like astronauts' pizzas floating above their table. A lot of photos in the book show astronauts smiling. Living and working in space is very demanding, but astronauts love what they do.



Jessica Meir, US

Q

Do you have a favorite part of the book?

A

My favorite spread is *Astronauts view Earth from space*. “**Wow!!!**” they **exclaim**. Finding an X word is not easy! And I wish I could look down at Earth from the space station.



From the book *Astronauts Zoom!* by Deborah Lee Rose, (c) 2021
(Photos: NASA, left, ESA/NASA, right)



Q

Why did you write *Astronauts Zoom!* as an alphabet book?

A

When I first read that astronauts on the International Space Station orbit Earth at 17,500 miles per hour, the word “zoom” immediately popped into my mind. I wrote down the two words “*astronauts zoom*” and suddenly realized they would make a perfect title for an A to Z book. (This was way before kids, teachers and parents started zooming everyday for school and work.)



Q Is this the first alphabet book you've written?

A My first alphabet book is titled *Into the A, B, Sea: An Ocean Alphabet*. I wrote it when my son was just learning to write his letters, and he was practicing writing in the sand on a beach by the ocean.

Q How do you write books about places you've never been, like deep in the ocean or far out in space?

A I start by doing a TON of research about those places. Then I use my imagination to pretend I can actually go there!



M.E. Morin, US

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A photograph of two astronauts in white space suits working on the exterior of the International Space Station. The station's complex metal structure and various equipment are visible. The Earth's blue and white horizon is in the background. A large blue graphic element, resembling a stylized speech bubble or bracket, is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Thank You!

Photo source: NASA - <https://images.nasa.gov>

Victor Glover

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