

Read the text about the BASE jumper Felix Baumgartner. Some words are missing. Complete the text by writing one word for each gap (1-12) in the spaces provided on the answer sheet. The first one (0) has been done for you.



Fearless Felix

At last his dream came true. (0) After five years of preparation, Felix Baumgartner eventually carried (1) out his record-breaking free-fall sky dive on 14th October, 2012. It was a unique publicity stunt, providing global exposure for a brand of energy drink (2) which fittingly promises to give you wings so you can fly. The media dubbed Baumgartner “Fearless Felix.”

It's easy to criticize Baumgartner, accusing him of (3) being nothing more than a sensation-seeking stuntman. But how many of us would be able to stand on the brink of a capsule 24 miles above the surface of the earth, deliver a few words of wisdom, no (4) less how well rehearsed, then say “I’m going over now” and actually do it? Who is brave and fit enough to survive such an experience? How many of us could summon up the courage to launch ourselves into space and hurtle towards the ground at a speed of over 800 mph? The answer is very few and for excellent reasons, obviously. While we enjoy observing such exploits, the (5) majority of us are far too cautious to take life-threatening risks (6) like the kind that Baumgartner is used to facing. Our natural instinct is to (7) avoid danger, injury, pain and death at all costs.

And yet the human (8) nature has an urge to break boundaries, to explore, discover and try things out, and perhaps we (9) admire courageous individuals like Baumgartner to stand in for us and follow the drive “to boldly go where no man has gone before,” in the words of Star Trek’s Captain Kirk. There have to be those (10) whose aim in life is to set themselves challenges and push themselves to the limit, not resting until they have completed their mission or at (11) least attempted to do so.

These people are both selfless and selfish: selfless in that they are prepared to sacrifice their (12) lives in their quest for knowledge and unprecedented experiences; selfish in that they are so consumed by their goals that they put them before everything and everyone else. The family and friends who cherish them must learn to accept this.

Fearless Felix

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