

## Hot Air Balloons

From classics such as Jules Verne's *Around The World In 80 Days* to modern stories like *Cogheart*, hot air balloons have featured in many fantastic tales throughout the years. You might be interested to know that the first hot air balloon launched nearly a hundred years before Jules Vern mentioned them in his classic novel.

The first hot air balloon ride was the first time a human had drifted into the air without being tethered to the ground. On November 21st, 1783, the French duo Jean-François Pilâtre de Rozier and François Laurent d'Arlandes took to the skies of Paris in a balloon designed by the Montgolfier brothers. A decade later, the French government used a hot air balloon for observation during the battle of Fleurus. This was the first time a balloon had been used for military purposes.

Early balloons were filled with hot air while on the ground and then allowed to float up into the air. This limited how far they could travel. The first balloons with an on-board heat source weren't developed until the 1950s. The first successful flight of a balloon with its own heat source took place in October 1960. Nowadays, balloons are used mainly for fun or as part of festivals.

That's not to say that people don't try to break records in hot air balloons. In 2005, Vijaypat Singhania set the world record for the highest altitude reached in a hot air balloon. He beat the previous record of 19,811 metres by reaching 21,027 metres. In 1991, Per Lindstrand and Richard Branson flew 4,767 miles from Japan to Canada to set a record for the longest flight in a balloon. Along the way, they reached the fastest speed for a balloon of 245 miles per hour.

The first non-stop balloon trip around the world was complete by Bertrand Piccard and Brian Jones in 1999. In total, they spent 19 days, 21 hours and 55 minutes in the vessel. In 2016, Fedor Konyukhov set a new record for the fastest solo journey around the world of 268 hours and 20 minutes.

## FESTIVAL OF COLOUR

Every October, the city of Albuquerque in New Mexico hosts the largest hot air balloon festival in the world. The event lasts for nine days and features hundreds of balloons of all shapes and sizes taking to the skies in an amazing display of colour. Locals say that the crisp autumn mornings make the perfect backdrop for the festival, and it's been happening annually since 1972.

In the first year, there were only 13 balloons, and it took place in the car park of a shopping centre. Numbers gradually increased over the decades with over 1,000 balloons taking part in 2000. Each year, hundreds of thousands of visitors pile through the gates to watch the launches and to take part in the carnival atmosphere. Over 25 million photographs are snapped each year, making it one of the world's most photographed event.



**1**

Who wrote *Around The World In 80 Days*?

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1 mark

**2**

Look at the second paragraph.

Which word means “tied to”?

Tick **one**.

Drifted

Decade

Observation

Tethered



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1 mark

**3**

**Modern balloons** are very different to **early balloons**.

Give an impression of each type of balloon, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

Impression	Evidence
<hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

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3 marks





**4**

Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	False
The Festival of Colour is held in New York.		
The Festival of Colour is photographed by a lot of people.		
The heighest altitude reached in a hot air balloon is 19,811 metres.		
The Montgolfier brothers designed the first hot air balloon.		

2 marks

**5**

Look at the section: **Festival of Colour**.

Which words would best describe the festival?

Tick **two**.

Bustling

Quiet

Colourful

Declining

2 marks

**6**

How many balloons took place in the first Festival of Colour?

\_\_\_\_\_

1 mark

# SATs Practice - Answers

1. Jules Verne
2. Tethered
3. **Give 1 mark for two correct impressions. Give 1 mark for each correct piece of evidence from the text up to a maximum of 3 marks for the question.**  
**Early balloons couldn't travel very far**  
They had to be heated on the ground and then sent up. They couldn't be reinflated once you were in the air.  
**Early balloons were useful in war**  
The French government used them during the battle of Fleurus  
**Modern balloons can travel long distances**  
Modern balloons can be heated in the air and so can travel greater distances  
The longest flight for a balloon is 4,767 miles  
**Modern balloons are fast**  
The fastest speed for a modern balloon is 245mph
4. **Give 1 mark for two correct answers. Give 2 marks for three correct answers.**  
False  
True  
False  
True
5. Bustling  
Colourful
6. 13