One Supersonic Space Jump



Written by Pippa Quam

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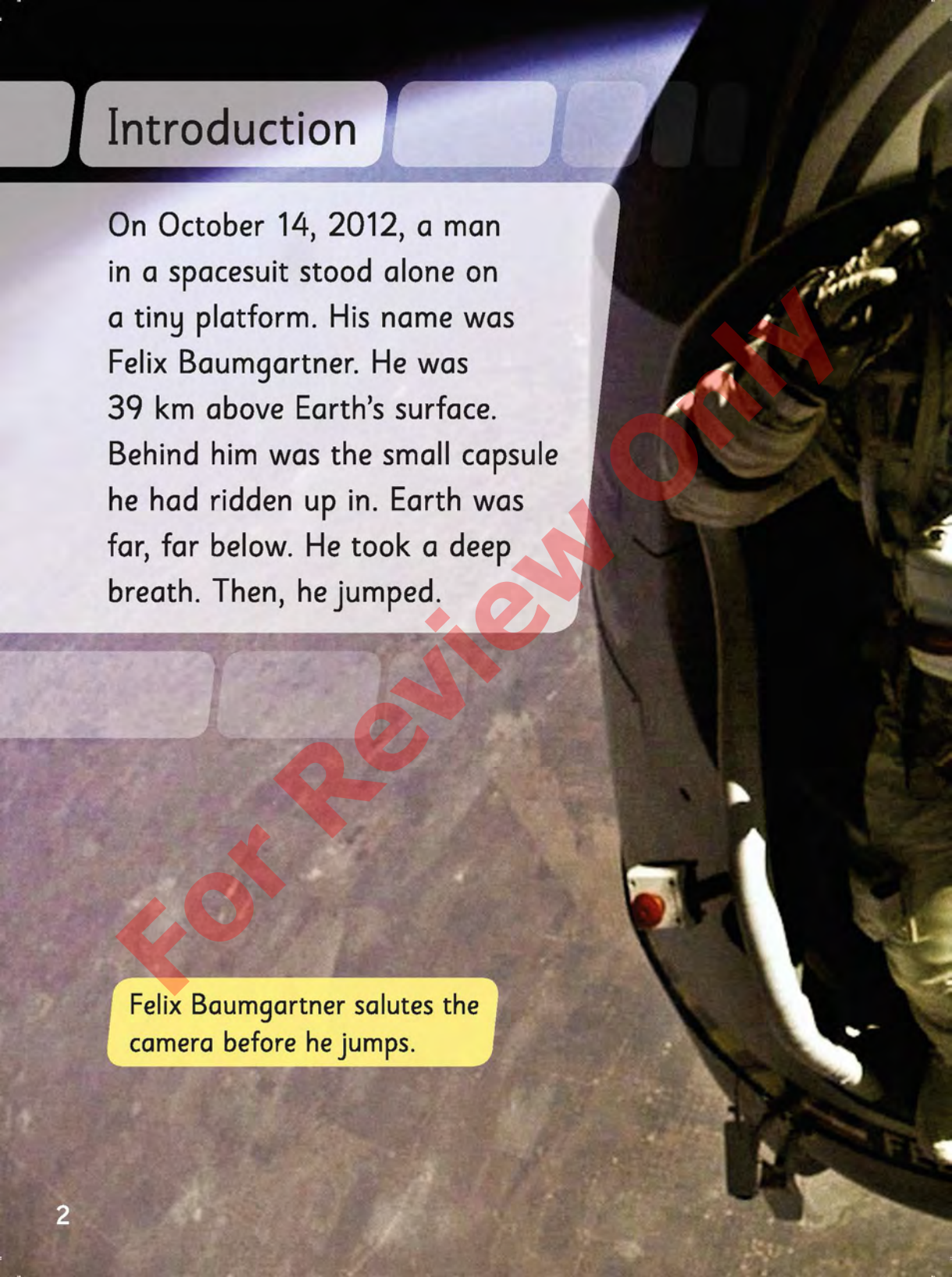
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Introduction

On October 14, 2012, a man in a spacesuit stood alone on a tiny platform. His name was Felix Baumgartner. He was 39 km above Earth's surface. Behind him was the small capsule he had ridden up in. Earth was far, far below. He took a deep breath. Then, he jumped.



Felix Baumgartner salutes the camera before he jumps.

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Felix went into a head-down, feet-up position. He gained speed. Without anything to slow his fall, he was soon streaking towards Earth at more than 1,300 km an hour. He was falling faster than the speed of sound. He had broken the **sonic barrier**.



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Felix jumps from the capsule and falls towards Earth.

Then, a bad thing happened. Felix lost control. He began spinning very fast. Blood started getting pushed to his feet and head. This is called a **flat spin**. Before anything worse happened, Felix gained control. Flat spins can be deadly. Luckily, Felix was not hurt. He fell straight again. He fell for four minutes and 20 seconds. Then, he pulled a cord that released his parachute. It opened above him. Felix floated down to Earth. He landed unhurt on the ground.



Felix is delighted to be on Earth again.

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