

## Holland's king reveals secret life as pilot

20th May, 2017



Next time you take a flight, you just never know who might be at the controls. It could be a king. Holland's King Willem-Alexander has just revealed he has been secretly flying planes for the Dutch carrier KLM for the past 21 years, completely unbeknown to his passengers. The 50-year-old king got his military pilot's license as a member of the

Royal Netherlands Air Force when he was in his twenties. He developed a love of flying and trained to become a commercial pilot. He revealed his secret life as a pilot in an interview with Dutch media. He flew for KLM twice a month. The king said he was now preparing to upgrade his skills. He is back on the aircraft simulator to train to fly Boeing 737s.

King Willem-Alexander told reporters that his passion for flying meant he could relieve all stress while up in the skies. He explained: "You have an aircraft, passengers and crew. You have responsibility for them. You can't take your problems from the ground into the skies. You can completely disengage and concentrate on something else. That, for me, is the most relaxing part of flying." He said it was easy to keep his anonymity while flying, and that very few passengers ever knew he was piloting their plane. He said: "I always say that I wish everyone a heartfelt welcome on behalf of the captain and the crew. I don't have to say my own name, but most people don't listen anyway."

Sources:

*Washingtonpost.com / newweek.com / dutchnews.nl*

## Writing

Kings and other royals should all do "normal" jobs like the rest of us. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

flight / controls / secretly / passengers / pilot / love / secret life / upgrade / skills / passion / stress / aircraft / crew / responsibility / sky / flying / anonymity / welcome

## True / False

- a) Holland's King Willem-Alexander has been flying planes for 21 years. T / F
- b) King Willem-Alexander became a commercial pilot in his twenties. T / F
- c) King Willem-Alexander flew twice a month for KLM. T / F
- d) King Willem-Alexander is training to fly Boeing 737s. T / F
- e) Flying helps get rid of the king's stress. T / F
- f) The king said you could take your problems into the skies. T / F
- g) The king said keeping his anonymity was very difficult. T / F
- h) The king had to say his name in the cockpit many times. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. <b>secretly</b>    | a. sincere      |
| 2. <b>developed</b>   | b. improve      |
| 3. <b>revealed</b>    | c. greet        |
| 4. <b>upgrade</b>     | d. evolved      |
| 5. <b>train</b>       | e. focus        |
| 6. <b>passion</b>     | f. disclosed    |
| 7. <b>concentrate</b> | g. team         |
| 8. <b>heartfelt</b>   | h. on the quiet |
| 9. <b>welcome</b>     | i. love         |
| 10. <b>crew</b>       | j. learn        |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What kind of secret life would you like to lead?
- b) What do you think of the king for flying?
- c) Should the king get a salary for his flights?
- d) Who would you like to be pilot of your plane?
- e) Would you like to learn to fly?
- f) What do you think it's like to be a pilot?
- g) Do you think KLM should have told passengers the pilot was the king?
- h) What skills would you like to upgrade?

## Phrase Match

- |                                     |                           |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. you just never know who might be | a. all stress             |
| 2. completely unbeknown             | b. simulator              |
| 3. when he was in                   | c. for flying meant       |
| 4. he was now preparing to          | d. to his passengers      |
| 5. aircraft                         | e. of the captain         |
| 6. his passion                      | f. at the controls        |
| 7. he could relieve                 | g. on something else      |
| 8. concentrate                      | h. upgrade his skills     |
| 9. it was easy to keep his          | i. his twenties           |
| 10. on behalf                       | j. anonymity while flying |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Do you get to follow your passion every day?
- What do you do to relieve your stress?
- Are you good at keeping secrets?
- What is the most and least relaxing part of flying?
- How important is it to keep your anonymity?
- Should all kings and other royals do normal jobs too?
- What questions would you like to ask King Willem-Alexander?

## Spelling

- completely nbnknwueo to his passengers
- got his rmiltiya pilot's license
- trained to become a craolicmem pilot
- He edvalere his secret life as a pilot
- preparing to dgaprue his skills
- back on the aircraft isltoruam
- he could ivleeer all stress
- You can completely eigsendag
- cnteoaatrnce on something else
- it was easy to keep his naintomyy
- a tfehltare welcome
- on lbhefa of the captain and the crew

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. d	3. f	4. b	5. j
6. i	7. e	8. a	9. c	10. g

## Role Play

### Role A – Airplane Food

You think the food is the best thing about flying. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): the in-flight entertainment, the flight attendants or taking off.

### Role B – In-Flight Entertainment

You think the in-flight entertainment is the best thing about flying. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): the food, the flight attendants or taking off.

### Role C – Flight Attendants

You think the flight attendants are the best things about flying. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): the in-flight entertainment, the food or taking off.

### Role D – Taking Off

You think taking off is the best thing about flying. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): the in-flight entertainment, the flight attendants or the food.

## Speaking – Flying

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things about flying at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| • taking off          | • the food                |
| • being up in the air | • the flight attendants   |
| • duty free shopping  | • in-flight entertainment |
| • landing             | • the airplane seats      |

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.