My name is Julie Payette, I am an astronaut from Canada.

What was the most surprising thing about your first flight in space?

For me one thing that I did not expect is that on my first flight we had a spacewalk and I was the person in charge of suiting up my colleagues.

Depressurizing the hatch for them to go outside, conducting the spacewalk from inside. And then when they came back in,

I was the person responsible to re-pressurize the airlock and then open the hatch. And when I opened the hatch I thought,

wow, I'm smelling this kind of cold, aseptic smell, and I thought, wow,

this is the smell of space because the airlock had been exposed to the vacuum of space for several hours.

And when we opened the hatch from inside, well this cold smell, this smell of nothing really,

because there's nothing left in there, was the smell of space. And that I did not expect.

Why do you study so many languages?

People often ask me why it is that I've studied many languages and I always reply, well because it's useful,
because we're humans and we like to communicate. And if we can communicate in a way that both sides are comfortable.

knowing many languages is actually very useful.

What are you most looking forward to on your next flight?

I've been assigned to fly in 2009 aboard space shuttle Endeavour, STS-127. It's a construction flight for the International Space Station, a very busy flight with five spacewalks. We'll operate four different robots. We'll install elements of the Japanese module and also we're going to change out batteries for our electrical system.

It's really hard to tell which part of this flight I'm most looking forward to.

I'm actually looking forward to the training with my crew. The one year that we spend all together on the ground preparing for the mission making sure we'll execute the plan that's been designed for us properly once in space.

And then of course going back and having the chance to be in weightlessness, see the Earth from above again. It's an extraordinary privilege.

What advice do you have for students?

It's about finding yourself a goal, something you like to do. The only thing you shouldn't do is do nothing.
But find what you are good at and what your interests are, and then you have to put effort. There's nothing free in this world.

So you have to prepare yourself. If you want to be a first violinist in an orchestra, you'll have to work hard.

But if that's your goal, then you have to go for it. You have to set your dreams high and then work hard to achieve them.

And the good news about it is that effort does pay. By putting your mind to it, by working hard, by never giving up

even when it feels hard and that you don't see necessarily success right away,

don't give up because everything is possible with a bit of effort. Even the Earth can be at your feet.