READING AND USE OF ENGLISH PART 7

Read this article about fitness activities and match questions 1–10 on page 11 with letters A–D.

UNUSUAL FITNESS ACTIVITIES

A Hot yoga

Yoga has long been considered one of the best exercises around, and one that can be practised virtually anywhere, including at home. Hot yoga, as the name suggests, takes it a stage further by turning up the heat, requiring a temperature of around 40° C and humidity of 60 per cent. Clearly, such a change is going to make you sweat more, and this is the whole point as it is supposed to eliminate harmful chemicals and toxins from your body. In a nutshell, hot yoga retains the mental focus of the more traditional version of the discipline but is designed to push your body much harder. The heat increases your heart rate and helps thin the blood, stimulate your metabolism and burn calories at a faster rate. As well as increased strength, stamina and flexibility, practitioners point to a number of other health benefits, such as curing back pain and improving the skin, with many even claiming it has boosted their performance in other sports.

B Aerial fitness

If you ever went to the circus as a child, you probably marvelled at the power and fitness of aerial performers. So if you have ever thought of having a go at such activities yourself, aerial fitness, which is based on similar techniques, may be just what you are looking for. Learners usually start off with the silks – two lengths of fabric attached to the ceiling. Once you have mastered some climbs, you then practise various ways of manoeuvring the body around them, including learning to hang upside down – not something you do every day! More expert practitioners can later progress to more complex devices, such as hoops, trapezes and slings, and there is even an aerial form of yoga that you can try. Aerial fitness techniques do require you to support your own body weight so clearly the benefits include improved general strength and also increased shoulder mobility. Furthermore, think of the respect you will get from friends and family when you tell them all about it!

C Underwater cycling

Underwater cycling or aqua-cycling combines the concept of a spinning class with the benefits of exercising in water. For those new to the concept, it does literally mean that exercise bicycles are placed in a swimming pool! While spinning, which often involves standing up and bouncing, can create strain on your knees, cycling underwater prevents stress on the joints, because the water provides extra support for the body. Unlike spinning too, it is suitable for people of any age, size or shape, even pregnant women and those recovering from injuries, making it perfect for those who find the idea of group exercise a little intimidating.

D Obstacle races

If these were a favourite from your primary school sports day, you can now recreate the fun on a much grander scale. Obstacle races have become fashionable again and you are guaranteed to have a great time with your friends and family while keeping fit. These are usually large-scale, organised events, which can be in urban or rural settings and can involve all kinds of natural and man-made obstacles. You could be jumping over fires, climbing walls or crossing rivers. You might bounce on trampolines, slide down huge water chutes or crawl through tunnels. One thing you can be sure of is that there will be mud – lots of mud! The race might involve dressing up in silly costumes and will probably end with a giant party. Check the internet for events coming up near you.

Which activity

is mentioned as being good for impressing others?	**1**	.....
is described as a bigger version of a competitive event from childhood?	**2**	.....
is claimed to help remove damaging substances from your body?	**3**	.....
uses a change of environment to make it less stressful on the body?	**4**	.....
sees beginners learn to adopt an uncommon body position?	**5**	.....
is an intentionally more challenging version of a well-known activity?	**6**	.....
would be fun for anyone who participates, in the writer's opinion?	**7**	.....
allows users to move on to different equipment as they improve?	**8**	.....
is claimed to help athletes do better in other sporting disciplines?	**9**	.....
is appropriate for those who don't necessarily have good levels of fitness?	**10**	.....

SPEAKING PART 2

1 **Look at the photos and decide which photo (A or B) each comment corresponds to.**

1. It looks a lot riskier and more exciting than the other picture.
2. They can do whatever they want rather than doing what they're told to do.
3. It looks very controlled – everyone looks the same as everyone else.
4. Even though it looks a little boring, it's probably very good exercise.
5. One key difference is that they're out in the fresh air instead of being stuck inside a gym.
6. It looks as though they are at school or in a club.
7. I'd say the risk of injury is much greater.

2 **Choose the correct preposition in these sentences describing the photos.**

1. There are buildings *on* / *in* either side of the photo.
2. I can see some kind of gym equipment *in* / *at* the back of the photo.
3. The girls are standing *in* / *on* the tips of their toes.
4. Both boys are right *in* / *at* the middle of the photo.
5. There are some ropes hanging down *to* / *from* the ceiling.
6. I can see blue sky *on* / *in* the background.
7. *In* / *On* the top left corner of the photo there are some ladders.
8. *On* / *In* the foreground there is a brick wall.