READING

1 **Read the text quickly and answer the questions.**

1 Who are the new BMXers?
2 Do they like racing or 'freestyle' BMX?

17 **Did you think that BMX racing was just for men? Think again …**

Meet the new BMXers

It was a dark, rainy, winter's day at the National Cycling Centre in Manchester (UK) and I was taking photographs of the girls' BMX team. They were riding around the track with apparently no fear. They all obviously had a real passion for the sport.

Olivia, aged 15, has long, brown hair. She's smart and confident, and the way she was smiling showed how much she loved it. How did she first become interested in BMX? [1] _____ . Although all the racers were boys, she knew instantly it was the sport for her. 'It's not harder for girls to get into the sport,' she said – anyone can do it. 'BMX gives you knowledge. When you come to the track, you learn something new every day.'

So what is a BMX? A BMX is a bike with small wheels and a low seat. Small wheels actually go faster than big wheels at speeds of up to 20 km/h. [2] _____ These mean that a bike can travel quickly without the rider using their legs too much. But there are no gears on a BMX, so the rider has to pedal a lot to go fast. [3] _____ .

Some BMXers love doing jumps and crazy stunts – this is called 'freestyle'. Other riders prefer racing. BMX races are fast but short. [4] _____ Both riding styles have something in common: riders fall off their bikes a lot. That's why they all wear a helmet, as well as knee and elbow guards under their racing clothes.

Many people think that BMX is scary or dangerous, but fear isn't a thought that goes through this BMX team's minds. [5] _____ They don't see the difference between male and female, not while they are out on the track doing what they enjoy the most.

2 **Read the article again. Five sentences have been removed from the text. For each space choose the correct sentence. There are three extra sentences which you do not need to use.**

A She laughed because some of the riders were moving their legs so quickly.
B They usually only last for about 40 seconds.
C BMX race bikes can be very expensive.
D She was watching her older brother race.
E They weren't worried by the rain either.
F They see BMX as a fun sport, a way of life, a good social activity.
G Normal bikes have at least 20 gears.
H This is the biggest problem with BMX races.

TALKING POINTS

Should schools offer the same sports to girls and boys? Or are some sports for boys and others for girls?

Do you think there is too much sport on TV? Why? / Why not?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

3 Match the highlighted words in the text to the meanings.

gears | guards | helmet | stunts | track

1 part of a bicycle that controls the speed of the wheels _____

2 tricks or difficult jumps on a bike _____

3 a path, often circular, used for races _____

4 a hard hat that protects your head _____

5 things you wear to protect parts of your body when playing a sport _____

READING

1 You are going to read an article about the benefits of snowboarding. Read the article quickly and tick (✓) the best alternative title.

1 How to stay healthy in your teens ☐
2 Snowboarding has great benefits for teens ☐
3 Snowboarding help teens stay out of trouble ☐

The amazing health benefits of snowboarding

Snowboarding is an exciting outdoor activity and is becoming very popular among teenagers. Here, we find out how it can help you to become more healthy and enjoy life more.

Taking chances is a great way to help you to have confidence in yourself – even if you don't get it right the first time. That's why snowboarding is a fantastic way to learn and develop a new interest. I met Kathy Champion, 15, on Mont Blanc, where she explained why snowboarding is a great benefit for teens.

(1) _____ At only nine years old, she was already snowboarding with her dad in Scotland and she continues to love it to this day. 'Being in the mountains for hours every day made me feel so healthy and alive,' she says. It helped her to understand how her body works because she learned techniques to help her to ride the snowboard properly. **(2)** _____ 'Snowboarding taught me to believe in myself, even when I was worried about hurting myself.' Did she get hurt? 'Yes, once or twice, nothing serious,' she says. '**(3)** _____ It made me want to succeed even more and get to the bottom of the mountain!'

In what other ways can snowboarding make you healthy and enjoy life more? 'It keeps you very fit, very positive, but it also helps you to make new friends,' Kathy says. **(4)** _____ 'You have support from people who understand what you're doing and are there to help you improve.' And she thinks the feel-good part of snowboarding can also help teenagers keep out of trouble. 'Some people I know from school laugh at me when I tell them how great I feel after snowboarding. **(5)** _____ ' So, what is Kathy's advice? 'Get a snowboard, get healthy – and enjoy life!'

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2 Five sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from sentences A–H the one which fills each gap (1–5). There are three extra sentences which you do not need to use.

A But it didn't make me stop.
B Kathy started snowboarding at a young age.
C She believes that doing an extreme sport also introduces you to a new and positive community.
D She knew she was going to be good at snowboarding.
E She already understood how to ride a snowboard.
F It also made her feel that she could do something very well.
G They think that hanging out on the street and doing stupid things is fun – I don't see how!
H She feels teenagers think it is too dangerous to try snowboarding.

3 Match the highlighted words in the text to their meanings.

1	achieve something you want to do	●	● get hurt
2	something someone tells you to help you	●	● benefit
3	ways of doing something well	●	● advice
4	feel pain because of an accident	●	● techniques
5	an advantage from doing something	●	● succeed

4 Complete the sentences with the highlighted words from the text.

benefit | techniques | get hurt | advice | succeed

1 You have to work very hard to _____.
2 I never fall off my bike and _____.
3 The _____ of doing a new sport is that you learn new skills.
4 I surf every day and have learned the best _____.
5 My _____ to you is – start snowboarding now!

LIVEWORKSHEETS