

Reading – Gerunds & Infinitives

Discuss:

What's a *thrill-seeker*? Are you one?

Read the magazine article below about some unusual sports and discuss the following questions:

1. Which of the sports seem the most dangerous?
2. Which of the sports would you like to try?
3. Do you think these sports would be popular here in Portugal?

If you thought that sport had anything to do with health, then think again. Here are some of the latest sports people have invented to scare themselves to death. Any of these sports will give you a thrill, but we've awarded them 1 to 5 to show just how dangerous they are.

Thrills and Spills

A Jet Belting

If para-gliding seems to be a bit safe to you, why not do what James Bond did on screen 20 years ago and take to the skies in a jet belt? They were originally invented in the 1960s, but new materials and fuels have now made the jet belt much more practical. You may remember seeing one at the Los Angeles Olympics. The Texan Flying Belt Company have made the latest version that uses a jet of super-heated air to give lift-off. Take-off and flying are fairly safe, but it's probably worth mentioning that you might have a few problems when you get round to landing. You can't afford to make a mistake.

At the moment, flight times are short, but the makers are thinking of selling a version that can fly for well over an hour, so jet-belting is bound to become a big hit in the near future. Prepare yourself for the thrill of a lifetime.

Danger rating: 3

B Air Chair

We'd suggest taking up the air chair if you're either lazy or useless at sport. Basically the equipment is a water ski with a seat on top, and the whole thing lifts out of the water. You are strapped to the seat.

The air chair can give so much lift in one jump that the results are spectacular – when you've learned to do it, jumping out of the water, twisting the chair and trying to land again is a real challenge and a real thrill.

If you ever feel like giving up because it's too hard, then just remember this. The air chair was designed by Mike Murphy, whose 77 year-old mum loves doing it. You don't intend to be beaten by a pensioner, do you?

Danger rating: 2

C Street Luge

You're up in the hills above Hollywood, and you're about to race, feet first, down a steep road. You can't help feeling scared. That's OK. Street luge has that effect. It's a version of the skateboard, but is long and more stable. This is a good thing when you realize that you can expect to go over 150km an hour.

Street luge appears to be a great way to hurt yourself unless you do it at official meetings that are properly run and supervised – don't even consider doing it on an ordinary road. You'll need a decent race suit and special shoes, because your boots are your brakes. What does it feel like? Well, just imagine being in a bed that someone has turned into a powerful motorbike!

Danger rating: 4

D B.A.S.E. Jumping

There's one thing you need above all else when you go B.A.S.E. jumping – nerves of steel. B.A.S.E. stands for Buildings, Antennae, Span, Earth, which is another way of saying jumping off high objects. If you aren't used to skydiving, then forget it – you need to have incredibly fast reflexes because you have to open the parachute at exactly the right moment. It's easy to see why B.A.S.E. jumping is so exciting – you really do risk being seriously injured. B.A.S.E. jumping is against the law in the UK and America, so you'll have to go to France or Norway if you want to try it where you're allowed to jump. And think very carefully before you decide to have a go – more than 20 people have already died looking for this kind of thrill

Danger rating: 5

Read the article again and answer questions 1-12 by choosing from the sports **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**. Underline the section in the text that helped you decide. There is an example at the beginning:

Which statement refers to which sport (**A-D**)?

You do not need great athletic skills to do this.	0	B
Some people have been killed doing this.	1	
You need to have very fast reactions.	2	
This sport involves going downhill very fast.	3	
This sport is forbidden in some countries.	4	
You require special clothing.	5	
This can be enjoyed by a wide age range.	6	
Only do this if you have had experience of a similar sport.	7	
This sport was in a film a long time ago.	8	
This sport should only be done at organized events.	9	
This sport will soon become more popular.	10	
This sport becomes more exciting as you get more experienced.	11	
Better technology is still being developed for this sport.	12	