

If you're new to running, or new to marathons, you might be worried about or even **fearful** of the distance. And these feelings are completely understandable, given the fact that more than 42 kilometres is a very long way. However, more and more people are taking on this challenge every year, and for very good reasons.

Obviously, running such a long distance requires a lot of training, and the more you train, the more your endurance will be **enhanced**. And of course, as you become more physically active, your heart and muscles will be stronger, your blood circulation will improve, and you will most likely get in shape in no time. Additionally, there are also mental and social benefits such as feeling less stressed and more energized as well as having the chance to meet and establish meaningful relationships with other people.

If you think about it, running a marathon is also a chance for personal development. Everyone has at least one fear or insecurity, and for many people, completing a marathon race can seem like an extremely daunting or even impossible task. Of course, it's true that **this** is a big challenge that requires commitment and perseverance. **That being said, every time you step outside out of your comfort zone and accomplish something new, you will grow stronger and become more confident.**

Sometimes, you can actually help many others when you run a marathon. Many runners now combine their marathon goal with the goal of helping others by participating in races that raise money for charity. Besides, running in such marathon races will most likely give you all the motivation you need to get through the exhausting 42-kilometer run. After all, it's quite difficult to quit when you know that you are giving help to people in need.

**Question 1:** According to the passage, all of the following are benefits of running a marathon EXCEPT \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. You will be able to improve your blood circulation and quickly get in shape.
- B. Your endurance will start to improve as you train harder and harder.
- C. Your muscles will be strengthened since you are more active.
- D. You will feel less stressed when meeting other people.

**Question 2:** The word "fearful" in paragraph 1 could be best replaced by \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. scary
- B. afraid
- C. anxious
- D. frightening

**Question 3:** The word "enhanced" in paragraph 2 is OPPOSITE in meaning to \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. preserved
- B. augmented
- C. weakened
- D. disseminated

**Question 4:** The word "this" in paragraph 3 refers to \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. personal development
- B. insecurity
- C. completing a marathon
- D. challenge

**Question 5:** Which of the following best paraphrases the underlined sentence in paragraph 3?

- A. Every time you leave your comfort zone and achieve something new, you will become stronger and more confident.
- B. Each time you move outside your comfort zone and accomplish something odd, you will grow more resilient and confident.
- C. Whenever you step outside your comfort zone and succeed in something different, you will feel a sense of superiority.
- D. Every time you venture beyond your comfort zone and do something unique, you will grow stronger and become less confident.

**Question 6:** Which of the following is TRUE according to the passage?

- A. If you want to run a marathon, you need to commit and persevere.
- B. When you complete a marathon, you will no longer have any fear.
- C. Most runners will not run marathons that do not raise money at all.
- D. You cannot complete a marathon if you do not want to help others.

**Question 7:** In which paragraph does the writer mention the physical benefits of running?

- A. Paragraph 1
- B. Paragraph 2
- C. Paragraph 3
- D. Paragraph 4

**Question 8:** In which paragraph does the writer discuss personal growth opportunities that come from running a marathon?

- A. Paragraph 1
- B. Paragraph 2
- C. Paragraph 3
- D. Paragraph 4

On a stormy night in 1707, four ships struck rocks off the south coast of England and sank. [I] One thousand, four hundred sailors were drowned. [II] The ships had crashed because they had no way of knowing how far they had travelled in a particular direction; they could not calculate their longitude, which required accurate time measurement. [III] In such difficult circumstances, they believed that the best response to the disaster was a competition: the Longitude Prize. [IV]

The Longitude Prize was no ordinary competition. To win it, someone had to find a way of calculating how far a ship had travelled east or west from its point of departure. Geniuses such as Sir Isaac Newton had failed to find a solution, so to **ensure the interest** of Britain's greatest scientific minds, the government offered a prize of £20,000 — the equivalent of £2.6 million in today's money. But to everyone's surprise, it wasn't a famous academic who solved the problem, but an unknown carpenter.

When John Harrison wasn't working with wood, he was making clocks. An accurate clock would allow sailors to calculate their position, but at the time it was thought impossible to create a mechanical clock that could work on a ship. The movement of the sea and the changes in temperature destroyed the delicate parts. However, after three frustrated attempts, Harrison's fourth sea clock, H4, finally **triumphed**. Its mechanics were so good that the H4 worked better than most clocks on land.

