

Try a triathlon

1. Can you swim? Can you ride a bicycle? Can you run? Have you ever thought of putting all three together to try a triathlon? There are many schools that take part in organised races. Competing in a triathlon is a great way to get fit, have some fun and meet new friends.
2. The sport of triathlon was started about 35 years ago by a group of friends who began training together in swimming, cycling and running. Their sessions often ended in races and before long, the idea of putting all three together was suggested. The new sport of triathlon was born!
3. There are a number of standard racing distances set in competitive triathlon. These include the Olympic distance, which is used at most national and international events and takes top athletes less than two hours to finish. The ironman triathlon is a feat of super endurance which can take the winner about eight hours to complete. But don't be alarmed ... the distances for juniors are much shorter!
4. The swim can take place in an indoor or outdoor pool, or in open water, such as a river, lake or the ocean; where you are allowed to wear a wetsuit. For juniors, the bike ride is usually somewhere away from busy traffic and the run is in a park.
5. Although there are only three sports in triathlon, there are four disciplines—the fourth one is *transition*. Top international triathletes will tell you that races are won and lost in transition. You may be the fastest swimmer, cyclist and runner, but if your changeovers from swim to bike and bike to run have not been planned and practised, you could lose the race.
6. In a short triathlon, you don't need to worry about food. If you have eaten the right foods before the race, you have enough fuel in your tank to see you through to the end. But you absolutely must drink plenty of water!
7. If you drink at each transition and more while you are on the bike, that should be enough to prevent dehydration. You may think it is better to save time by not stopping for a drink because you don't feel thirsty, but by the time you do feel thirsty, you are already getting dehydrated.
8. If you can swim, ride a bike and run, go and try a triathlon!

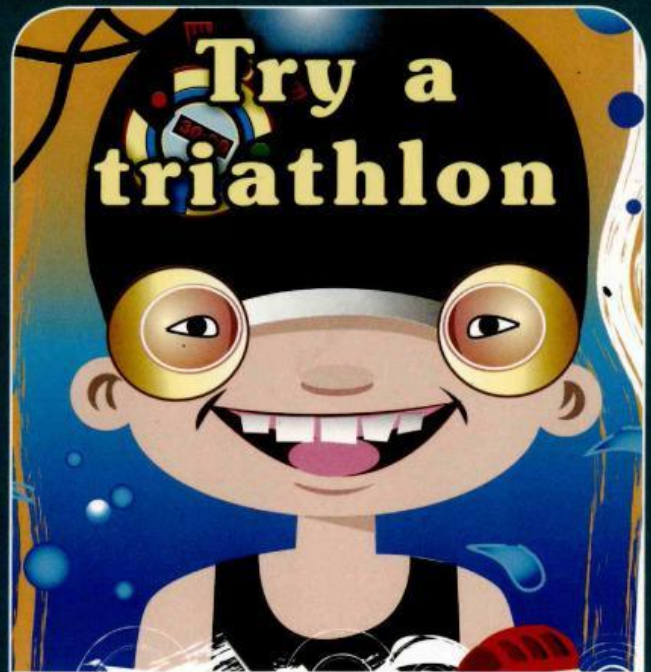


1. In Paragraph 5, the word *transition* means:
(a) being in a state of shock.
(b) staying for just a short time.
(c) the change from one thing to another.
2. The writer would agree that triathlon is:
(a) a great sport.
(b) boring.
(c) a waste of time.
3. Which paragraph is mainly about how triathlons can be won or lost?
(a) Paragraph 2
(b) Paragraph 5
(c) Paragraph 7
4. Which statement best summarises the text?
(a) the history of triathlon
(b) what a triathlon involves
(c) how difficult triathlon is
5. It is an opinion, not a fact, that triathlons:
(a) began in the 1970s.
(b) can take place over different distances.
(c) are a great way to get fit.
6. Including transitions, there are _____ parts to a triathlon.
(a) five
(b) three
(c) four
7. During a triathlon, the most important thing to take with you is:
(a) water.
(b) a mobile phone.
(c) a mirror.
8. In the sport of triathlon, the _____ gets the best work-out.
(a) brain
(b) upper body
(c) lower body
9. Dehydration can occur because you:
(a) drink too much.
(b) don't drink enough.
(c) don't eat enough.
10. An ironman triathlon is _____ an Olympic triathlon.
(a) shorter than
(b) longer than
(c) the same as
11. You can predict that in a triathlon you would:
(a) always feel hungry.
(b) take a rest between each transition.
(c) sweat a lot.
12. In Paragraph 3, the phrase *super endurance* means great:
(a) staying power.
(b) courage.
(c) intelligence.



Something extra

- ★ Design a poster for the sport of triathlon.
- ★ For one week, plan when you could train for each discipline of triathlon.



Answers

1. (c) the change from one thing to another
2. (a) a great sport
3. (b) Paragraph 5
4. (b) what a triathlon involves
5. (c) are a great way to get fit
6. (a) five
7. (a) water
8. (c) lower body
9. (b) don't drink enough
10. (b) longer than
11. (c) sweat a lot
12. (a) staying power