

SWIMMING IN THE NORTH POLE

1. Read the information about the TED speaker and answer the questions.

LEWIS PUGH Coldwater Swimmer

Lewis Pugh is considered the greatest coldwater swimmer in history. However, he doesn't swim to win races. Instead, he swims to draw the world's attention to environmental issues. Pugh believes that we all need to make changes in our lives in order to slow climate change. He asks, "What decisions are we going to make today to ensure that we all live in a sustainable world?"

Lewis Pugh's idea worth spreading is that sometimes we have to do extraordinary things in order to call attention to important issues.

a. "Sustainable" means able to continue for a long time. What do you think Pugh means by "a sustainable world"?

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b. How do you think Pugh's swim might bring attention to the issue of climate change?

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2. What do you know about the North Pole? Read the statements and write True or False. Then watch the video and check.

1. _____ It is frozen all year long.
2. _____ It is the coldest place on earth.
3. _____ Now it has less ice than 100 years ago.
4. _____ It is covered by sea water and sea ice.
5. _____ It is in Antarctica.



3. The sentences below will help you learn words from the TED talk. Read and listen to the sentences. Guess the meaning of each bold word. Then match each word to the correct definition below.

- a. He **gasped** for air because the cold temperature made it difficult to breathe.
- b. Air and water **expand** when they get hotter.
- c. After months of training, he was **mentally** exhausted and could not think anymore.
- d. Everyone was very **emotional** when they saw that the orphaned polar bear cubs had died. Some people were crying.
- e. The Arctic is one of the coldest **regions** on Earth.
- f. The beauty of the ice **drew** many tourists to the Arctic last year.
- g. After a few minutes in Arctic **conditions**, your hands and feet become numb. You can't feel anything.
- h. The sea is likely to rise more than 200 feet. Just to **put** that **in perspective**, 200 feet is about the height of a 20-story building.
- i. As the climate gets warmer, the glaciers begin to **retreat**. The Columbia Glacier in Alaska has **shrunk** by over nine miles in the last 25 years.
- j. The balloon became larger and larger until finally, it **burst**.

- 1. _____ (n) geographic areas
- 2. _____ (v) attracted
- 3. _____ (v) broke open as a result of pressure
- 4. _____ (n) the situation in which people live or work
- 5. _____ (v) breathed in quickly
- 6. _____ (adv) in a manner that is related to the mind or thinking
- 7. _____ (v) move back
- 8. _____ (v) increase in size
- 9. _____ (v) give some context
- 10. _____ (adj) full of strong feeling



4. Watch the TED talk and check the most important idea that Pugh wants his audience to take away.

- 1. ☐ Swimming can be a symbolic act.
- 2. ☐ The Arctic is a very beautiful place.
- 3. ☐ The North Pole is changing because of melting sea ice.
- 4. ☐ Climate change needs to be addressed by everyone immediately.

5. Watch the TED talk again and choose the best answer to complete each statement.

- 1. Pugh visited the Arctic for the first time _____.
a. when he was a child b. seven years before his swim c. just before his swim
- 2. Pugh says that about _____ of the Arctic sea ice has melted away.
a. ten percent b. a quarter c. half
- 3. The temperature of the water at the North Pole is _____.
a. below freezing b. above freezing c. at the freezing point
- 4. When Pugh did his test swim, _____.
a. his fingers froze b. his goggles froze c. he stopped breathing
- 5. Pugh's swim across the North Pole lasted about _____.
a. ten minutes b. twenty minutes c. forty-five minutes