

WINTER POOL SWIMMING

Read the text and answer the questions below.

BREAKING THE ICE

Michael Sharp visits an outdoor pool

It's just before 7 am and I'm at an outdoor swimming pool in London, where the temperature of the water is only 11 degrees above freezing! Amazingly, there are already eight people swimming.

I had intended to discover, by taking a swim myself, why anyone would want to swim in such cold water. However, in the end, I decided to ask people instead. Peter Smith has been a swimmer here for three years, coming every morning before work. "It's wonderful on a cold winter morning," he says. "I thought it would make me healthier and I haven't been ill once since I started."

All the swimmers here say the same thing. They all feel fitter. However, not everyone agrees with them.

Some doctors say it helps fight illness, while others say it could be dangerous, especially for your heart.

I asked Peter what they did on the days when the pool was frozen. That's easy, "he said. "There's place in the middle where the ice is thin and easy to break. You have to avoid the sides where the ice is thicker. I did try to swim there once just to see what it was like, but I found that it was impossible to break through the ice."

I would like to be able to say that I too dived happily into the water and swam a couple of hundred metres. But the truth is, fearing the worst, I walked very carefully into the pool, stood there almost in shock and then got out again after 30 seconds before I became a block of ice!

1 What is the writer trying to do in this text?

- A explain why some people like swimming in the cold.
- B prove an idea he has had about keeping fit
- C warn people not to go swimming in cold water
- D advise people on ways to stay healthy

2 What can a reader find out from this text?

- A where to go swimming in London
- B what happened to the writer at the pool
- C how to keep warm in cold water
- D how often the writer goes swimming

3 What does Peter Smith say about his morning swim?

- A It has helped him recover from a recent illness.
- B He enjoys it when the pool is covered in ice.
- C It is the reason why he keeps well all year
- D He thinks it makes him work better

4 What did the writer feel about swimming at the pools?

- A It was as cold as he expected
- B He did not like the ice
- C It made him feel healthier
- D He enjoyed swimming up and down

5 What do you think the writer would say to his friends?

- A "My doctor has advised me not to go swimming there."
- B "It's amazing how the pool stays clear of ice all winter."
- C I really enjoyed my early morning swim at the outdoor pool
- D "I was surprised at the number of people in the pool - they must be crazy."

