Helen Skelton's High-Wire Challenge

Television presenter Helen Skelton has completed various dangerous challenges for charity, including a desert marathon run and a journey down the Amazon River in a tiny boat. For her latest challenge, Helen walked on a high wire, a long thin piece of metal, 66 meters above the ground, between the two towers of an empty power station. There was no safety net, only a belt around her waist attached to another wire above. To help her keep her balance and not too tall, she carried a long stick, weighing eight kilograms.

Helen took lessons from an expert high-wire walker. Although she already had a few circus skills, she quickly discovered that high-wire walking was completely different. 'The training was a shock', said Helen. 'I didn't realize how strong I'd need to be. Every day started at 8 am with a run up a steep hill; then came an hour of exercises, with another hour of them after my day practicing on the wire. I also had to learn how to fall onto the wire so that if I slipped I could carry on. Every time I fell on the wire it hurt badly. But it was essential to keep a positive attitude: if I was nervous and started shaking, so would the wire!'

The day of the actual challenge was windy and Helen controlled herself by taking deep breaths as she moved step by step along the wire. The 150-metre walk took 15 minutes. 'That was the scariest thing I've done,' she admitted afterward. 'I'm glad it's over!'

The experience has not prevented Helen, however, from planning her next charity project: to reach the South Pole by ski, kite and bike.

Fill in the Blank: Fill in the blank with the correct words.

1. Helen Skelton completed a __ marathon run for charity.
2. For her latest challenge, Helen walked on a high wire __ meters above the ground.
3. Helen carried a long stick, weighing __ kilograms, to help her keep her balance.
4. Helen took lessons from an expert __ walker.
5. The experience has not prevented Helen from planning her next charity project: to reach the __ Pole by ski, kite and bike.

Word bank: eight, high-wire, 66, desert, South

Multiple Choice Questions: Choose the correct answer from the choices for each question.

1. What was Helen Skeltonâ€™s latest challenge?
   a) Running a marathon
   b) Walking on a high wire
   c) Swimming across the English Channel
   d) Cycling across the country
2. How high above the ground did Helen walk on the high wire?
   a) 50 meters
   b) 66 meters
   c) 100 meters
   d) 150 meters

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3. What did Helen carry to help her keep balance on the high wire?
   a) A backpack
   b) A long stick
   c) A parachute
   d) A water bottle
4. What time did Helenâ€™s training start each day?
   a) 6 am
   b) 7 am
   c) 8 am
   d) 9 am
5. What is Helenâ€™s next charity project?
   a) Climbing Mount Everest
   b) Swimming across the Amazon River
   c) Reaching the South Pole by ski, kite, and bike
   d) Running another marathon

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