

A1. INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article about an unusual sport.

Extreme Ironing

What activities are sports? Running and football? Sure. Synchronized swimming? Probably. Ballroom dancing? Maybe. Playing cards? Probably not. Gardening? Definitely not. Most people believe that sports must combine physical activity and competition. If we use this definition, then extreme ironing is a sport.

What is *extreme ironing*? Extreme ironing is pressing clothes in very difficult places. Ironists must carry their irons, ironing boards, and wrinkled laundry with them to the competition site. Some ironists take electric generators. Others heat their irons on gas stoves. The competitors get more points for the difficulty of the location. However, the quality of the ironing is important, too. Each item must be well pressed.

Extreme ironists compete in some amazing places. Contestants iron while they are climbing rocks, climbing mountains, and climbing trees. They iron in canoes, on the backs of cows, and even underwater. One team ironed while on a kayak in the Atlantic Ocean. This sport is not a joke. Teams from 30 countries competed in the first world championships in Germany in 2002. Phil Shaw is the inventor of extreme ironing. He says that there are about 1,500 ironists worldwide. Some teams have corporate sponsors. The German corporation Rowenta, an iron maker, pays for Shaw's team. The goal of extreme ironists is to have their sport included in the Olympics. Maybe then they can start using their real names. At the moment, contestants use names such as Steam, Cool Silk, and Iron Man. Why? Shaw admits, "Most competitors don't want people to know that they are ironists."



A2. Read the statements and write *true* (T) or *false* (F).

- _____ 1. The writer believes that sports must be dangerous.
- _____ 2. Extreme ironing is a very old sport.
- _____ 3. Extreme ironists almost always compete outside.
- _____ 4. Some companies sponsor extreme ironing teams.
- _____ 5. Extreme ironists don't like people to know their names.

B. Answer the questions.

1. Check (./) the items that ironists must carry with them.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ iron | ☐ laundry basket |
| ☐ ironing board | ☐ gas stove |
| ☐ electric generator | ☐ food |
| ☐ clothes | |

2. What do ironists get points for?

- a. how much laundry they iron
- b. how fast they iron
- c. how well they iron
- d. how long they iron

3. What else do they get points for?

- a. when they iron
- b. where they iron
- c. what they iron
- d. why they iron