

'Horrendous blisters': Retired UK banker, 65, attempts to run 200 marathons in 200 days

Level 2: Intermediate

Article summary: This article discusses how one retired banker from Devon decided to run 200 marathons in 200 days, and how scientists are using him as a case study.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Presenting

Language focus: The Present Perfect and the Past Simple

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

7. *raising money*
8. *flat out*
9. *elite athlete*
10. *pints*
11. *A walk in the park*
12. *get going*
13. *Gout*
14. *Headed to*
15. *Working (his) way*
16. *flare*
17. *Muscle mass*
18. *on average*

- b. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to complete the sentences using words from the previous activity in the correct form. Encourage students to read complete sentences to you when they give answers, so you can check their pronunciation of the key words.

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to get students thinking about the topic of endurance sports. You can brainstorm the different endurance sports as a class. This may also be helpful for the last task, so try to elicit the following names: *marathon running, ultramarathon, Ironman, long-distance / open water swimming, mountaineering, hiking, road cycling / long distance cycling, long distance skiing*. Have students discuss the questions and ask any volunteers to share their experiences with endurance sports.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to find the words in the article and then complete the sentences. Allow a few minutes for students to check answers in pairs or groups before checking answers with the whole class.

Key:

1. *Blisters*
2. *curveball*
3. *itinerary*
4. *calorie intake*
5. *stretch (myself) physically*
6. *Found (his) feet*

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2. *raise money*
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7. *find his feet*
8. *pint*
9. *stretch yourself physically*
10. *head to*
11. *work your way*
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3. Comprehension check

- a. Students can work individually or in pairs. Encourage students to underline the section in the article where they found the answers and to correct any false answers.

Key:

1. T
2. F – He never gets blisters.
3. T
4. F – He is working his way south.
5. F – He adapts as he goes.
6. F – It's sometimes more and sometimes less.
7. T
8. F – He eats whatever and drinks beer.
9. T
10. F – He listens to music or Welsh lessons.

4. Key language

- a. Students work individually and analyse the sentences from the article. Ask them to identify the tense for each verb in the sentences.

Key:

1. PP
2. PS
3. PS
4. PP and PS
5. PP

- b. Have students explain why each sentence uses the Present Perfect or the Past Simple. The usual explanation students know is that we use the Past Simple when we know exactly when things happened in the past, especially with phrases like *ago*, *yesterday* and so on. However, realistically, the time things happened is often implied. Point out that, for example, in sentences 2 and 4, the time for when the Past Simple action happened isn't explicitly given, but we know that the action happened in the past, and it has no relevance to the present. In contrast, the actions in sentence 5 do have relevance to the present, because the weight loss has happened up to now. You can extend this

activity by asking students to reflect on whether their first languages have similar tenses and use them in a similar way. If they do not, ask what tenses are used instead.

- c. Have students write the correct form of the verbs in parentheses. Compare answers as a class.

Key:

1. have finished
2. visited
3. have done
4. has started
5. have lost
6. read

5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the questions in pairs or groups. Ask them to justify their opinions, referring to their own experiences whenever possible.

6. In your own words

- a. This task can be done individually or in pairs. It could also be given as homework. After putting students in pairs, ask them to pick one of the events. Ideally, there should be enough events so that no two groups or students have the same one. Have them research the event and prepare a presentation following the bullet points given.
- b. Ask students to share their presentations with the class. You can follow this with a discussion about the events that were covered. Ask students if any of them sound appealing, what they found surprising about these events, etc.