



Sports and Leisure

Short-answer questions: bog snorkelling in Wales | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. What is the strangest sport you have heard of?
2. Would you enter a muddy race for fun?
3. Why do unusual events attract tourists?
4. Should leisure activities be serious or silly?

Exercise 1 at a glance

Read one factual text. Answers are in the text. Copy exact words and check the question carefully before choosing your answer.

2. Read for overall understanding

Read the text. Why has bog snorkelling become a memorable event?

Bog Snorkelling in Wales

Llanwrtyd Wells in mid Wales is known for some of Britain's most unusual events. One of the best known is the World Bog Snorkelling Championships. The competition takes place at Waen Rhydd peat bog, usually during the August Bank Holiday weekend, and attracts competitors who are willing to get very cold, muddy and wet.

The idea is simple but strange. Competitors must complete two lengths of a water-filled trench cut through the bog. They wear a snorkel and flippers, but normal swimming strokes are not allowed. Instead, competitors move through the water using only the power of their legs. This makes the race slower, messier and more comic than a normal swimming event.

Bog snorkelling began as a local idea and became part of Llanwrtyd Wells' reputation for eccentric sport. The town has also hosted other unusual events, which helps bring visitors to a small rural community. For local businesses, a strange event can be useful because it gives people a reason to travel, stay overnight and talk about the place afterwards.

The championship is competitive, but it is also playful. Some entrants wear fancy dress, and spectators often come as much for the atmosphere as for the finishing times. The race can be physically hard because the water is cold, visibility is poor and the trench is narrow. Even experienced swimmers may find it difficult because the rules prevent them from swimming normally.

Safety still matters. Competitors need suitable equipment, and organisers have to think about weather, water conditions and medical support. The event may look ridiculous, but moving through cold muddy water is tiring. People who take part need to understand the rules and their own fitness.

Bog snorkelling shows how leisure can become part of local identity. It is not famous because it is elegant or glamorous. It is famous because it is different, funny and strongly connected to one small Welsh town. That is exactly why many people remember it.

The event is also a good example of how a small town can create an identity through humour. Llanwrtyd Wells is not a large resort, but unusual competitions have helped put it on the map. People may first hear about the town because of bog snorkelling, then discover walking routes, countryside and local businesses nearby.

Competitors do not all enter for the same reason. Some want to beat a fast time, while others take part simply to say they have done it. This mixture of serious effort and deliberate silliness is part of the event's charm. It allows ordinary people, visitors and experienced competitors to share the same muddy trench.

3. Strategy focus

Check the rules

Sports texts often include rules and exceptions. Read carefully so you do not confuse what competitors can do with what they cannot do.

4. Exam-style short-answer questions

Answer the questions using words from the text.

1. Where does the competition take place? [1]

2. How many lengths of the trench must competitors complete? [1]

3. What swimming technique is not allowed? [1]

4. Why can a strange event be useful for local businesses? [1]

5. What makes the race physically hard? Give one detail. [1]

6. According to the text, what are three reasons bog snorkelling is unusual or memorable? [3]

5. Vocabulary notebook

Underline five useful words or phrases. Check their meaning, then record them in your vocabulary notebook.

6. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: Would you try bog snorkelling?

2. Summary: Summarise the event in about 50 words.

3. Creative task: Write rules for a new unusual sport.

4. Research: Find another unusual British competition.

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2. Read for overall understanding

Suggested answer: It is memorable because competitors race through a peat bog using snorkels and flippers, the rules are unusual, and the event attracts visitors to a small Welsh town.

4. Exam-style short-answer questions

1. Waen Rhydd peat bog
2. two lengths
3. normal swimming strokes
4. it gives people a reason to travel, stay overnight and talk about the place afterwards
5. Any one from: cold water; poor visibility; narrow trench; rules prevent them from swimming normally.
6. Any three from: water-filled trench; snorkel and flippers; normal swimming strokes are not allowed; muddy; fancy dress; connected to one small Welsh town.

Notes for checking

1. Answers should be short and clearly based on the text.
2. Accept bracketed or optional wording if the meaning is clear.
3. For the final question, learners need three separate details.