



Sports and Leisure

Short-answer questions: parkrun | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. Would you join a free weekly sports event?
2. Is walking as valuable as running in a community event?
3. What makes exercise easier to continue?
4. How can volunteers support sport?

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 parkrun become popular with different kinds of people?

Parkrun

Parkrun is a free community event where people can walk, jog, run or volunteer. Most adult events are five kilometres long and take place on Saturday mornings. The idea is simple, but it has become popular in many countries because people can take part at their own pace and do not need to join a sports club.

The first event was held in Bushy Park in London in 2004. It was originally called the Bushy Park Time Trial. Only a small group took part at the beginning, but the idea gradually grew as more parks and communities started their own events. The name later changed to parkrun as the idea spread beyond one park.

Parkrun is not a race in the usual sense. Participants receive a time, but they do not have to be fast. Some people try to improve their personal best, while others walk with friends, push a buggy or return after illness. This makes the event suitable for different ages and fitness levels. The same course can include quick runners, beginners and people who simply want to be active outdoors.

Volunteers are central to the system. They set up the course, welcome new participants, scan barcodes and record times. Without volunteers, the weekly events could not happen. Many people volunteer when they are injured, resting from running or simply wanting to help. Some volunteer roles are done before or after the event, so people can still take part on the course.

The barcode system allows participants to use the same registration at different events. A runner who usually attends a local park can visit another town or country and still receive a result. This has helped parkrun feel like both a local habit and an international community. People often describe visiting another event as parkrun tourism.

The event is deliberately simple. There are no medals for finishing first, and people are encouraged to thank volunteers as well as celebrate fast times. New participants register once online and bring a personal barcode to the finish. This keeps the organisation manageable even when hundreds of people attend a popular event.

Parkrun can also help local parks feel safer and more active. When people meet regularly in a public space, they may begin to recognise neighbours and feel more connected to the area. Cafes near a route may also benefit when participants stay for breakfast or coffee after the event. In this way, a simple run or walk can become part of local weekend culture.

Parkrun also supports wellbeing. Regular activity can improve fitness, but the social side matters too. Meeting people outdoors, following a routine and feeling part of a group can encourage people to return week after week. Because walking is welcome, the event can feel less intimidating than a traditional race. For some people, the most important result is not the finishing time but the habit of turning up.

3. Strategy focus

Check the time reference

If a text describes the past and the present, check whether the question asks about the first event or the system now.

4. Exam-style short-answer questions

Answer the questions using words from the text.

1. What do people not need to join in order to take part? [1]

2. What happened to the name as the idea spread beyond one park? [1]

3. What might some participants try to improve? [1]

4. When are some volunteer roles done? [1]

5. What do people often call visiting another event? [1]

6. According to the text, what are three reasons parkrun can feel suitable for different people? [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 parkrun work well near your school?

2. Summary: Summarise parkrun in about 50 words.

3. Creative task: Design a poster encouraging beginners to join.

4. Research: Find one free sports activity in your area or another country.

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4. Exam-style short-answer questions

1. a sports club
2. changed to parkrun
3. their personal best
4. before or after the event
5. parkrun tourism
6. Any three from: people can take part at their own pace; participants do not have to be fast / walking is welcome; it is suitable for different ages and fitness levels; people can walk with friends, push a buggy or return after illness; it is less intimidating than a traditional race.

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.