

LEAD IN

1- Look at the photos and answer the questions.

- What is going on in these pictures?
- What do the photos evoke?
- What environments are represented?
- What is the atmosphere like?



Useful structures:

- Use the Present BE + ing form to describe actions in a photo.
- Make assumptions using modals:
may / might / could + Verb.
They could be ... V-ing
- To make assumptions about the past, use:
may / might / could + Have + past participle
/!\ passive voice:
The photo must have been taken in ...

2- React and comment

- What about you, have you ever... ? Would you like to... ? Why (not)?
- Where do you usually swim? What is your favourite swimming environment? Do you have a favourite swimming spot?

WILD SWIMMING

The pandemic has been a tough time for swimmers. Lockdowns meant swimming pools were closed for more days than they were open. Outdoor swimming spots were only for use by those local enough to access them easily.

However, despite the restrictions, there has been a huge surge in the popularity of swimming, particularly outdoor swimming in ponds, lakes, reservoirs or the sea.

Recent figures from Sport England suggest more than 4.1 million people are now dipping more than their toe into Britain's waters to go open-water swimming.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jun/22/solstice-swimmers-around-the-uk-photo-essay> (excerpt)

A/ After reading the documents below (texts 1-3), answer these questions.

- 1- What growing trend has been observed?
- 2- What factors have contributed to its rise? Can you think of other reasons that are not mentioned in the texts?
- 3- Conversely, what considerations make this new hobby unexpected?
- 4- What are the (likely) side effects of this growing trend?
- 5- In what ways does wild swimming affect our senses according to Prof Macfarlane (text 3)?

Text 1:

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY OUTDOOR SWIMMING?

We take the broadest possible definition of outdoor swimming to include any swimming that takes place in water that isn't covered by a roof. This covers a large range of activities and participants from swimming in remote and untamed bodies of water, to triathlon style racing, long distance challenges such as English Channel crossings and cold water dipping. We most definitely include lidos in our definition as we're well aware those places inspire a unique devotion from their fans.

Other terms we might use, loosely, but not completely interchangeably include:

● **Open water swimming** – primarily referring to events and racing, often in wetsuits.

● **Wild swimming** – swimming in unsupervised locations in seas, rivers and lakes etc.

● **Marathon swimming** – either the 10km marathon swim distance and Olympic distance open water event, or longer (solo) swims across large bodies of water such as the English Channel or Catalina Channel.

● **Winter swimming** and cold water swimming – swimming outside, in natural water temperatures in winter, either for recreation or in competition.

Outdoor Swimmer Trends Report, February 2021

https://outdoorswimmer.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/TrendsReport_Full_LR.pdf

Text 2

Different strokes: open-water swimming takes the UK by storm

*It began as a **niche** hobby; now thousands of swimmers are signing up for more than 170 mass events that take place each year in Britain's lakes, rivers and seas*

Sandra Laville – Tue 18 Aug 2015 – The Guardian

As amateur swimmers prepare for the trailblazing open-water **mass** marathon that is the 10km swim down the river Dart, pioneers of outdoor swimming are reflecting on how far they have come.

With more than 170 events each year, open-water swimming has become a **pursuit** enjoyed by tens of thousands in the UK. This September, 1,600 men and women will take part in the river Dart swim in Devon – double the number of participants in the Outdoor Swimming Society's 2014 event. Across the UK, record numbers of swimmers have joined every event in the 2015 season.

"The first mass open-water swim we organised was in 2006 – a mile swim round Windermere," said Kate Rew, founder of the Outdoor Swimming Society, which celebrates its 10th anniversary next year. "Today, with people swimming much greater distances, one mile doesn't seem very much, but, at the time, these people felt like brave pioneers. Now the numbers of people taking part are in the tens of thousands."

Every summer brings warnings of the dangers of taking to the open seas or lakes, and cases of people drowning, but more and more people – most from their late 30s and into their 80s – across the UK are safely moving from swimming pools into open water, be it lakes, rivers or oceans.

Two years after Rew and her colleagues came up with what seemed a **madcap** swim around a **chilly** lake, British swimmers Keri-Anne Payne and Cassie Patten took silver and bronze medals in the Beijing Olympics outdoor swimming marathon, the first time the sport had been included in the Games.

"That was a turning point, I think," said Philippa Morrow, of the Great Swim series, which runs five open-water events **throughout** the year. "Keri-Anne and Cassie were very media friendly, and everyone who watched saw what a **gruelling** swim it was in China. It was the concept that people are in the water for that length of time – it struck people."

In the same year that Payne and Patten stood on the Olympic medal podium, Great Swim ran its first event, taking over where the Outdoor Swimming Society left off, with a mass swim in Windermere; 3,000 people took part. This year, more than 20,000 people registered for its five events: Loch Lomond in Scotland, Windermere, Manchester, Suffolk and the Royal Docks in London. Next year the series will include, for the first time, a 10km marathon in Windermere, with places all but selling out within a few days of being advertised. Figures from Great Swim series reflect the growing popularity of open-water swimming among all ages, with women making up 52% of participants in the 2014 series.

"This kind of swimming seems to attract a lot of women, and an older demographic, from those in their late 30s to people in their 50s, 60s and 70s," said Morrow. "It's a very varied audience and we have been amazed and really **heartened** that people want to take on longer and longer distances."

As the sport has grown, so has the organisation around it, and the commercial opportunities, with lakes across the country opening up and **charging** for lifeguarded courses to train in; for some, the antithesis of what wild swimming should be about.

"My concern is that, with all these organised swims that are taking place, the whole thing has just got a bit too organised, and it takes away from the spontaneity of stepping into the wild," said 65-year-old Barry Hall, who swims near his home in Southend-on-Sea with the Chalkwell Redcaps, one of the biggest outdoor swimming clubs in the country.

Rew agrees. "It's already happening to a degree, people are opening up lakes and charging £7 to go round a course with big inflatable buoys marking the way which is all so far away from the kind of swimming I like," she said.

"But I remain optimistic that the increase in popularity will lead to more free wild swimming and greater access to waterways in the same way walkers and climbers have increased access to a lot of the land, so you will still be able to find places to go and swim across the country, but you shouldn't expect to face someone who charges you entry."

Text 3:

Patron statement by Robert Macfarlane, The Outdoors Swimming Society

<https://www.outdoorswimmingsociety.com/patron-statement/> (edited)

To enter wild water is to cross a border. You pass the lake's edge, the sea's shore, the river's brink – and you break the surface of the water itself. In doing so, you move from one **realm** into another: a realm of freedom, adventure, magic, and occasionally of danger.

The Outdoor Swimming Society is there to give people a passport to a different world, or worlds. Once you see open water as something to be entered, rather than driven around, flown over or stopped at the brink of, then even familiar landscapes become **rife** with adventure. Britain seems newly permeable, excitingly deepened. Every lake or loch or lough is a bathing pool, every river a journey, every tide or wave a free ride. As a wild swimmer, you become an explorer of the undiscovered country of the nearby, passing through great geological portals, floating over drowned cities and kelp jungles, **spelunking** into sea-caves, or stroking out into the centre of cold Loch Ness, where the water – as OSS founder Kate Rew beautifully puts it in her book *Wild Swim* – is 'black as space'.

There's nothing faintly class-based about all of this. What could be more democratic than swimming? What more equalising than near-nakedness? You need even less equipment to swim than you do to play football. A bathing costume, if you insist. Then just enough common sense to avoid drowning, and just enough lunacy to dive in.

A century ago, Britain had hundreds of outdoor swimming clubs: The New Town Water Rats, The Tadpoles, The Serpentine, The Sheep's Green Swimmers, The High Gate Diving Club (...). Back then, it didn't seem remotely eccentric to **wallow** in a tidal pool, or crawl down a flashy river. But after the Second World War came the decline of lido culture, the rise of the municipal pool, the pollution of the river systems, and the understandable prizing of what we oddly call creature-comforts: air-conditioning, thermostats, the sofa.

Over the past decade or so, however, a desire for what might be termed 'reconnection' has emerged. A yearning to recover a sense of how the natural world smells, tastes and sounds. More and more people are being drawn back to the woods, hills and waters of Britain and Ireland. More and more would agree with Gary Snyder (forester, poet, tool-maker, Buddhist) when he writes: 'That's the way to see the world, in our own bodies'. As though our skin has eyes. Which, in a way, it does.

For when you are swimming outdoors, your sensorium is transformed. You see the world in All-New Glorious Full-Body Technicolour! Everything alters, including the colour of your skin: coin-bronze in peaty¹ water, soft green near chalk, blue over sand. You gain a **stealth** and discretion quite **unachievable** on land – you can creep past chub and roach, or over trout and pike², **finning** subtly to keep themselves straight in the current. You can swim with seals or eels (take your pick; I know which I prefer). You acquire what my friend Roger Deakin, author of *Waterlog* – a powerful inspiration for *Wild Swim* – once called 'a frog's eye view' of things.

And the smells! The green scent of the riverbank. (...) The mineral smell of high mountain lakes. Virginia Woolf, who used to bathe in the River Cam, near Granchester, brilliantly described its odour as one of 'mint and mud'. When I first came across this phrase, I misread it as 'mind and mud', which also seemed right for that university river.

'You can never step into the same stream', noted Heraclitus, philosopher of flux, back in the fifth century BC, 'for new waters are always flowing onto you'. Just so. A version of the truth that you can never go for the same wild swim twice. Weather, tide, current, temperature, company – all of these **shift** between swims. And different types of water actually *feel* different. Wild water comes in flavours. Not just salt and fresh, but different kinds of fresh. Next time you're on chalkland, for instance, find a spring or a river, and take up a handful of water as you might do a handful of earth. It feels silky between the fingers. Smooth, almost rounded. Quite different to granite water, or slate³ water.

Let's be clear, though, wild swimming is about beauty and strangeness and transformation – but it's also about companionship, fun, and a hot cup of tea or nip of whisky afterwards. Nor do all wild swims have to take place in what we might conventionally call a wild place. It's among the many merits of this society and its mission to encourage people back to wild swimming that it doesn't **shy away** from the agricultural-industrial aspect to outdoor swimming in Britain. Some of the most memorable plunges described in *Wild Swim* and on the OSS Swim Map occur in sight of a nuclear power station, or a farm building or pig-ark, or off a sea-beach thick with marine debris (...).

There's also the question of the cold. I used to be something of a cold-water fetishist. I dipped into part-frozen Himalayan rivers, bathed at midwinter in an imperial lake in Beijing, and once cracked the ice on a Cumbrian tarn and plunged in. But a dive into a Devon lake on New Year's Day, which left me green and nauseous with shock, has now **put me off** really cold-water swimming. Still, even in summer, there's no avoiding what James Joyce unforgettably called 'the scrotumtightening' moment of entry – which is usually accompanied by noisy intakes and expulsions of breath, raucous *hooo-s*, and *haaa-s*. Kate has coined a great new verb to describe the first few strokes of swimming in chilly water: 'to fwaw' (as in 'I fwaw fwawed into the middle of the lake'). I hope it makes it into the OED⁴.

Roger Deakin spoke to me several times about his **wariness** of any commercialisation of wild swimming. He was concerned that the improvisation of it all would be lost. But I know that he would have approved of the Outdoor Swimming Society. It's a society that, like *Waterlog*, will launch a thousand swimmers. So go on. Jump in and join them.

Robert Macfarlane*, May 2008.

1. peaty = tourbé 2. poissons d'eau douce: rouch = gardon, trout= truite, pike = brochet 3. slate = ardoise
4. refers to the fact that the OED (Oxford English Dictionary) is regularly updated with new words (neologisms) to reflect changes in word usage and to include new terms relating to current events and trends.

*Robert Macfarlane is Professor of Literature and the Environmental Humanities at the Faculty of English in Cambridge. He is well-known as a writer about nature, climate, landscape, people and places. His books include *The Wild Places* (2007), *The Old Ways* (2012) and *Landmarks* (2019). He is currently writing a book on rivers – *Is a River Alive?* – which is expected to be published in 2025).

B/ LANGUAGE

1- In text 1, find the words that mean the following in French.

1. isolés : _____ - 2. sauvages : _____ - 3. baignade : _____ -
4. piscines de plein air : _____ - 5. de façon approximative : _____ -
6. combinaisons de plongée : _____

2- Match the words in **bold type** in texts 2 and 3 with their synonyms or definitions below.

1. exploring: _____ - 2. done or occurring on a large scale: _____
3. from beginning to end: _____ - 4. roll or lie in water: _____
5. a regular hobby: _____ - 6. to think twice about: _____
7. encouraged: _____ - 8. filled: _____
9. asking payment for: _____ - 10. change (verb): _____
11. concerning a small, specialized group, not mainstream: _____ - 12. cold: _____
13. capacity to move quietly, to avoid detection: _____ - 14. impossible: _____
15. suspicion: _____ - 16. area, domain, scene: _____
17. physically demanding, exhausting: _____ - 18. swimming (as a fish): _____
19. impulsive, imprudent: _____ - 20. discourage (sb) from liking (sth): _____

3- a) **Phrasal verbs** are very common in English, especially in more informal contexts. They are made up of a verb and a particle or, sometimes, two particles. The particle often changes the meaning of the verb.

I called Jen to see how she was. (call = to telephone)

They've called off the meeting. (call off = to cancel)

b) Try to infer the meaning of the phrasal verbs from text 2, using the context to help you.

- to take to - to take over - to take on - to take away

- to leave off - to sell out - to make up

/!\ Keep in mind that in other contexts some of those phrasal verbs (like make up for instance) would have a different meaning.

C/ COMMENT

1- Explain the quotes or ideas expressed by Robert Macfarlane in his statement. Then discuss them, using two or three convincing arguments and relevant examples.

a) "To enter wild water is to cross a border" (paragraph 1)

b) Wild swimming as the exploration of an undiscovered country (paragraph 1)

c) "What could be more democratic than [wild] swimming?" (paragraph 2)

>> Before starting, read the segment on the commentary in the file "Méthodologie du résumé et du commentaire" in the methodology section of the EPI.

2- When you are ready, practice presenting your ideas orally.

A/ Text 1

As you read, look up the words / segments in bold type in a dictionary if you don't know their meaning. Take into account the context in which they are used.

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/placard>

<https://www.wordreference.com/enfr/placard>

Wild swimmers defend right to roam

Editorial team – Apr 28 2022 – BASE magazine

On Sunday 24th April 2022, a group of over 400 swimmers staged a protest, taking to the water at Kinder reservoir in a mass Swimpass to highlight what organisers describe as 'inadequate access to public waterways'. The event was one of a number of commemorative protests and events marking the first Kinder Scout mass trespass in 1932¹.

Activists donned their swimming costumes or wetsuits and waved **placards**, intent on improving access and their right to roam² in bodies of water in England and Wales. The demonstration happened just days after the UK government back-peddled on plans to evaluate and improve access to nature (...).

'We wanted to demonstrate in a really meaningful way, the huge numbers of people that are experiencing the benefits of outdoor swimming. It's clear that those benefits can be shared back into the environment by people being engaged,' Owen, one of the organisers of Sheffield Outdoor Plungers (SOUP) tells BASE.

'It's supported by so many people with all these different expertise – people who work in law, risk, the environment, community engagement, healthcare workers and the water industry itself. So when we campaign we have this real elite team of knowledgeable, skilled people.'

Kinder reservoir is owned by United Utilities, who operate a year-round swimming ban at the site. Access rights to reservoirs are a **hotly disputed topic** by swimmers – according to the Outdoor Swimming Society, 'Reservoirs are usually owned by water companies, and they have a legal duty to provide public access for recreation to the land and water, though in practice most have a *no swimming* rule and notices. There are campaigns to change this, with very good reasons why swimming should be allowed'.

Allowing access rights to reservoirs would mean 2000 more dipping spots would open up in England and Wales, **mitigating** issues with overuse and overcrowding as outdoor swimming continues to surge in popularity.

'Doing this at Kinder, on the 90th anniversary and following the route that the trespass took – it was very **momentous**,' says Owen.

Whilst the right to swim in the sea is **undisputed**, currently only 4% of inland waterways in England allow **uncontested** access to paddlers and swimmers and the legal position surrounding access is complicated and uncertain.

Taking the plunge in water where the right of access is contested means you could very well be accused of trespass, which is a civil offence, though not a criminal one. Conversely, swimmers in Scotland can swim freely in open spaces as part of their right to responsible access³ and have had unrestricted access to almost all 800 of the country's reservoirs since 2003.

'Reservoirs are particularly safe and clean, they're sited upstream of pollutants, generally have stony banks with good footpath access and what's underwater is relatively known. There's so many good things about them and yet we can't swim in them,' continues Owen.

'You only have to look to Scotland to see that opening up access to reservoirs is fine, and there are plenty of models that we can follow as to how this can work.'

Also at the demonstration was Emma, a Mental Health Nurse and passionate advocate for wild swimming and the benefits of spending time outdoors.

'From a healthcare perspective, wild swimming ticks all the boxes of the biopsychosocial model for health promotion, prevention and recovery. Looking at ways which we can improve people's health for free, should be high on the government's **agenda**, especially ones which may result in longer lasting positive changes than just prescribing medication on its own,' she says.

'This is why I, and hundreds of others, joined the Kinder trespass swim. To continue fighting to open up the countryside for all. I hope the roaming rights will increase and include areas for swimming. I would also like to see investment in how we can make the outdoors accessible for all, as there continues to be disparities in use.'

'It's a joyous activity and I wish for everyone to have the opportunity to try it, or to just enjoy the great outdoors and laugh at us strange folk who like to get cold for a hobby from the water's edge!'

1. The Kinder Scout Mass Trespass was a mass protest organised by the British Workers' Sports Federation (BWSF), in 1932 to highlight the lack of public access to open countryside as wealthy landowners denied walkers access to their land. [Learn more about the mass trespass here.](#)

2. You can access some land across England without having to use paths - this land is known as 'open access land' or 'access land'. Access land includes mountains, moors, heaths and downs that are privately owned. Your right to access this land is called the 'right to roam', or 'freedom to roam' (roam = to walk without a specific purpose).

3. The 2003 Land Reform (Scotland) Act introduced a right of responsible public access for recreational and other purposes, to land and inland water throughout Scotland, with a few exceptions. The right of access only applies if it is exercised responsibly, and the Code sets out what counts as responsible behaviour in a variety of circumstances.



Kinder Scout is a national nature reserve, located in the Peak District National Park, in the North of England. Google map.

Part 1: Comprehension

1- Introduce the text (*type, author, source, date and context, general topic, tone*).

>> Before writing your introduction, read "Introduire un document" in the methodology section of the EPI.

2- Propose an organised summary of the main information from the text. Make sure you use your own words. You may use the key words from the text but do not copy whole passages.

>> Before starting, read the segment on how to write a summary in the file "Méthodologie du résumé et du commentaire" in the methodology section of the EPI.

3- Explain in your own words what "trespass" means in this context and why it is particularly symbolic in this case.

Part 2: Commentary

Present a structured analysis of one of the following passages from the text, with two or three main points that you will illustrate with pertinent examples.

“From a healthcare perspective, wild swimming ticks all the boxes of the biopsychosocial model for health promotion, prevention and recovery. Looking at ways which we can improve people’s health for free, should be high on the government’s agenda, especially ones which may result in longer lasting positive changes than just prescribing medication on its own,’ she says.”

“This is why I, and hundreds of others, joined the Kinder trespass swim. To continue fighting to open up the countryside for all. I hope the roaming rights will increase and include areas for swimming. I would also like to see investment in how we can make the outdoors accessible for all, as there continues to be disparities in use.”

>> Before starting, read the segment on the commentary in the file “Méthodologie du résumé et du commentaire” in the methodology section of the EPI.

B/ Audio clip

Women Swimming in The Wild

The Conversation, BBC World Service, 29 Nov 2021 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3ct1p9h>

In this episode, entitled “Women Swimming in the Wild”, the host talks to two women about the health benefits of cold swimming.

Listen to excerpts of her conversation with Rachel Ashe, the founder of Mental Health Swims, a peer support community organising wild swimming or dipping events in the UK.

1) From [1:35] to [3:13]

What is this passage about? What question does the host ask Rachel? Listen to Rachel’s answers and note down the key information.

2) From [12:40] to [15:48]

Note down what Rachel says about the following:

- > where the mental health swim gatherings take place and why they are so popular.
- > who the participants are and the reasons why they take part.
- > how the organisers try to remove the barriers the participants may face.
- > whether women are more scared of swimming in cold water than men.

3) What are the following segments about? Note down what Rachel says about these issues.

a) From [19:57] to [20:43] > this segment is about _____

What Rachel says:

b) From [23:12] to [23:40] > this segment is about _____

What Rachel says:

>> Feel free to listen to the whole programme !

Rise in English bathing sites rated unfit to swim

By Jonah Fisher, BBC Environment Correspondent – 1 December 2023 – BBC

The number of English bathing sites rated as unfit to swim has risen to its highest level since a new rating system was introduced in 2015.



The River Wharfe was the first river in the UK to be given bathing water status, at Ilkley in Yorkshire, but its water quality has now been rated as "poor"

A total of 423 popular swimming sites, mostly beaches, were tested by the Environment Agency (EA) this summer for types of pollution that are known to be a risk to bathers' health. Eighteen were "poor", the highest since the new rating system was brought in.

The EA said the wet summer could have contributed to the results. This is because an increase in rain means more water running off roads and fields, which can bring more pollution into waterways.

A total of 281 bathing sites were rated "excellent" by the UK government's environment watchdog¹, which is 21 fewer than last year. A similar number of bathing sites reached minimum standards - "sufficient" or better - when compared to 2015, but in each of the last three years the number of bathing sites rated as "poor" has gone up.

Responding to the data, Water Minister Robbie Moore said "our bathing waters have improved significantly in recent years" and highlighted government plans for more investment and stronger regulation of water companies. [...]

Sewage² discharges

The increase in the number of bathing sites being rated poor comes amid growing awareness of the amount of untreated sewage being discharged by water companies. Last year, there were an average of 825 sewage spills into waterways per day.

"You know things are bad when even our dodgy³ testing system can't cover up the miserable state of water quality in England," says Giles Bristow, the head of campaign group Surfers Against Sewage.

"With a 50% rise in the number of bathing waters failing to meet minimum standards, and a significant drop in those rated excellent, it's clear that government and the regulator have been asleep at the wheel, all whilst water companies continue to profit from the pollution of our rivers and seas."

It is legal for water companies to discharge sewage after heavy rainfall, to stop the system being overwhelmed, but earlier this year a BBC investigation uncovered⁴ evidence that suggested it was also happening during dry weather.

Alan Lovell, the chair of the Environment Agency, said: "The slight fall in standards this year shows we must go further to drive improvements and that this takes time and investment.

"While overall bathing water quality has improved over the last decade due to targeted investment, robust regulation from the Environment Agency and work carried out by partners, these results show there is significant work still to do to ensure the quality of our bathing waters is increasing every year."

Rivers in 'very fragile state'

Almost all the designated bathing sites are on the coast, but three are rivers. All three have been given "poor" status, meaning people are being advised not to swim there.

James Wallace, chief executive of the River Action campaign group, said: "Sadly, that tells its own story, that the UK's rivers are in a very fragile state. Today only 14% of the UK's rivers are considered healthy. Many others like the iconic River Wye are so polluted they are at risk of ecocide."

The River Wharfe was the first river in the UK to be given bathing water status, at Ilkley in Yorkshire, but its water quality has now been rated as "poor".

The government is under mounting pressure to show it is taking concerns about the impact of discharges of sewage and agricultural run-off seriously.

"Our Plan for Water is delivering more investment, stronger regulation, and tougher enforcement to clean up our waterways and continue to improve our bathing waters," says Water Minister Mr Moore.

"We have also set stringent⁵ targets for water companies to reduce sewage spills from storm overflows which frontloads action at designated bathing waters to make the biggest difference to these sites as quickly as possible."

1. *organisation responsible for making certain that companies obey particular standards and do not act illegally.*
2. *waste matters from domestic or industrial establishments.* 3. *unreliable, substandard.* 4. *found*
5. *strict, rigorous*

1- Write an **organised summary** of the text.

2. Read [this text online](#) to see how the UK could learn from its European neighbours. Write down two or three ideas in your own words.

DISCUSSION

Read the following posts from The Guardian's readers (a-c), and an excerpt from an article published in The Financial Times (d) on the topic of wild swimming and join in the debate.

a) Counting the cost of wild swimming

"Hazy phrases like "access to our blue spaces" hide the reality of the destructive impact on river wildlife caused by the popularity of wild swimming (Education calls grow after week of tragedies in England's waters). My nearest river used to be a peaceful haven for wildlife. Its unofficial use last year as a "river beach" disturbed breeding kingfishers, causing them to abandon their nests. Wild swimming is the latest fashionable activity to prioritise the desires of human beings over other species' right to survive."
Kika Everington, Stratford, London

b) Wild swimming isn't a new fashion and is no threat to wildlife

"Wild swimming "the latest fashionable activity" (Letters, 26 July)? Hardly. Seventy years ago, I learned to swim in the River Wey, in the company of other local kids (and a lot of water voles and a pair of nesting swans). Forty-five years ago, we spent innumerable happy afternoons with our children swimming and splashing in the River Cherwell at Wolvercote – and there were other popular river bathing places in Oxford. Last week I took my granddaughter swimming in the River Chew. Wild swimming is certainly not a new fashion, though it has become riskier with the current levels of pollution in our rivers and lakes (not very beneficial for kingfishers, either)."

Pat Simmons, Bristol

c) "I've been swimming locally for five years. Most of the year I'm accompanied by seals, otters, geese, oystercatchers and a variety of other seabirds. In summer, the campervans roll in. Their owners don't swim, but the wildlife disappears – so don't blame the swimmers for disturbing wildlife."

Paul Williams, Argyll, Scotland

d) I am very aware that outdoor swimming is becoming the hobby that it's OK to hate. After too many "wild swimming" articles, far too many Instagram posts, there's now a lively backlash in the press. Swimmers in DryRobes look like unattractive saggy penguins, it seems, or we might even die from a newly publicised pulmonary condition. It's true: we really don't care what we look like. And yes, we all know this hobby carries risks, especially in winter. The simple truth is that we swim because it makes us feel amazing, inside and out. Nothing else matters. Submersion in water under 12C gives you a proper buzz on.

Isabel Berwick, February 2023

1 - Vocabulary.

a) In the texts above, find the words that mean the following.

- vagues: _____ / - a refuge: _____
- producing or reproducing by giving birth or hatching: _____
- surely not: _____ - building or having a nest (shelter): _____
- where you can go into the water for swimming, etc. : _____
- to arrive in large number: _____ - to accuse, hold responsible: _____
- a strong, negative reaction to something: _____

b) Match the animal names in French with their English counterparts cited in the texts.

- cygne : _____ - huitrier : _____ - loutre : _____ -
- martin-pêcheur : _____ - oie: _____ - phoque : _____

2 - Summarize the main arguments for / against wild swimming given by the readers/commentators in your own words. Use appropriate structures to link contrasting ideas (*although / however / on the other hand, etc.*).

3 - Oral tasks

a) Which arguments are **the most/least convincing**, in your opinion? Use the following expressions to express (dis)agreement.

<i>Expressing (strong) agreement</i>	<i>Expressing (strong) disagreement</i>
I agree (to some extent) with ... I strongly agree with ... He / she may have a point, however ... I couldn't agree more with ... I am in complete agreement!	I don't agree (at all) with ... I can't go along with that! I wouldn't say that myself. That is simply not true! I find that very difficult to accept/ believe ... I couldn't disagree more

b) Now, react to the readers' opinions and share your own. Use what you have learned throughout this dossier to propose an organised, coherent line of reasoning with several convincing arguments and examples. Then practice presenting your views orally.

NOTES AND ANSWER KEYS

Photo credits (page 1)

- Glen Coe, UK, Wild swimmers brave the clear icy water at the Meeting of Three Waters in Glen Coe in the Scottish Highlands. Photograph: Katielee Arrowsmith/SWNS. The Guardian February 2024
- *Londoners Can Now Cool Down By Taking A Dip In The Docks At Canary Wharf*, Secret London, 7 June 2023. Credit: Canary Wharf Group.
- *Serpentine Swimmers Brave Winter Waters in Hyde Park*. Credit: Cate Gillon, Getty Images.

Vocabulary (page 5 and 6)

1- In text 1, find the words that mean the following in French.

1. isolés : remote - 2. sauvages : untamed - 3. baignade : dipping - 4. piscines de plein air : lidos - 5. de façon approximative : loosely - 6. combinaisons de plongée : wetsuits

2- Match the words in **bold type** in texts 2 and 3 with their synonyms or definitions below.

1. exploring: spelunking - 2. done or occurring on a large scale: mass
3. from beginning to end: throughout - 4. roll or lie in water: wallow
5. a regular hobby: pursuit - 6. to think twice about: shy away
7. encouraged: heartened - 8. filled: rife
9. asking payment for: charge - 10. change (verb): shift
11. concerning a small, specialized group, not mainstream: niche - 12. cold: chilly
13. capacity to move quietly, to avoid detection: niche - 14. impossible: unachievable
15. suspicion: wariness - 16. area, domain, scene: realm
17. physically demanding, exhausting: gruelling - 18. swimming (as a fish): finning
19. impulsive, imprudent: madcap - 20. discourage (sb) from liking (sth): put sb off something

3- Phrasal verbs

To take to (§3) = to develop a steady/regular practice

To take over (§6) = to assume control, responsibility

To take on (§7) = to undertake, tackle (deliberately).

To take away (§9) = to remove

to leave off (§6) = partir, quitter

to sell out (§6) = to sell all one's merchandise

to make up (§6) = to represent, compose

Vocabulary (page 12)

a) In the texts above, find the words that mean the following.

- vague: hazy / - a refuge: haven
- producing or reproducing by giving birth or hatching: breeding (to breed)
- surely not: hardly - building or having a nest (shelter): nesting
- where you can go into the water for swimming, etc. : bathing
- to arrive in large number: to roll in - to accuse, hold responsible: to blame
- a strong, negative reaction to something: a backlash

b) Match the animal names in French with their English counterparts cited in the texts.

- cygne : swan - huitrier : oystercatcher - loutre : otter -
martin-pêcheur : kingfisher - oie : a goose (plural geese) - phoque : seal