

PAPER 1 Reading and  
Use of English

PAPER 2 Writing

PAPER 3 Listening

PAPER 4 Speaking

Part 1

Part 2

Part 3

Part 4

Part 5

Part 6

Part 7

You are going to read an article about why people do extreme sports. For questions 31–36, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

## Success and risk in extreme sports

*What is it that drives some to take extreme risks, while the rest of us hurry for the safety of the sidelines?*

Lester Keller, coach and sports-psychology coordinator, says that not everyone has the mental makeup to excel in extreme sports. 'It takes a certain kind of person,' he says. He notes that most of us hit a natural ceiling that limits our appetite for extreme risk and, as a result, our ability to perform well in tricky conditions.

But others have a much higher tolerance, if not desire, for risk. Keller points to Daron Rahlves, a top ski racer who spends the summer off-season racing in motocross competitions. 'He enjoys the challenge and the risk,' Keller said. Rahlves has told Keller that 'the high element of risk makes you feel alive, tests what you are made of and how far you can take yourself'. Rahlves said in a previous interview, 'I'm in it for the challenge, my heart thumping as I finish, the feeling of being alive'. He went on to point out that he would definitely get nervous on some of the courses, but that this would just make him fight more. The more difficult the course, the better, he reported. 'That's when I do best,' he said.

Psychologists note that some people seem to have a strong desire for adrenaline rushes as a thrill-seeking behaviour or personality trait. Like many extreme athletes, Emily Cook's appetite for risk appeared at a young age. 'I was both a skier and a gymnast,' said the former ski champion. 'I was one of those kids who enjoyed and excelled at anything acrobatic, anything where you were upside down. It was just kind of a part of Emily.' Cook noted that as her expertise grew, so did the stakes. As she started doing harder tricks, she was increasingly drawn to the challenge. 'There are definitely moments when you're up there doing a new trick and it seems like the stupidest thing in the world. But overcoming that is just the coolest feeling in the world. Doing something that you know most people wouldn't do is part of it.'

Shane Murphy, sports psychologist and professor, has worked with Olympians and other athletes. He says he is struck by the way they redefine risk according to their skills, experience and environment. 'I've worked with groups climbing Everest, including one group without oxygen. To me that just seems like the height of risk. But the climbers took every precaution they could think of,' he said. 'To them it was the next step in an activity that they've done for years.' Murphy said the perspective of extreme athletes is very different from our own. 'We look at a risky situation and know that if we were in that situation we would be out of control,' he said. 'But from the athletes' perspective, they have a lot of control, and there are a lot of things that they do to minimise risk.'

Climbing and other 'dangerous' activities are statistically not as risky as outsiders assume. Another key aspect of risk perception may be something referred to as 'the flow', a state in which many athletes become absorbed in pursuits that focus the mind completely on the present. 'Something that makes you try doing a tougher climb than usual, perhaps, is that your adrenaline flows and you become very concentrated on what you're doing,' mountaineer Al Read has said. 'After it's over there's exhilaration. You wouldn't have that same feeling if the risk hadn't been there.'

People of different skill levels experience flow at different times. As a result, some may always be driven to adventures that others consider extreme. 'I can enjoy hitting a tennis ball around, because that's my skill level,' Murphy says. 'But others might need the challenge of Olympic competition.'



31 By using the term 'natural ceiling', Lester Keller is

- A pointing out that many people don't actually want to do extreme sports.
- B explaining why some people aren't as good as they'd like to be at sport.
- C suggesting a point at which extreme sportspeople should stop taking risks.
- D highlighting the level of skill many extreme athletes aim to reach.

32 Daron Rahlves said that for him, taking risks

- A was something that forced him to face difficulties he usually avoided.
- B wasn't always worth what he had to put himself through physically.
- C was a way for him to continue to be excited by his place in the world.
- D was something he wouldn't do unless he knew he could overcome them.

33 What does 'that' refer to in line 18?

- A trying to do more difficult tricks
- B Emily's sense that she is being foolish
- C doing things that other people don't
- D Emily's desire to do acrobatic activities

34 What does Shane Murphy think about the mountain climbers he mentions?

- A They are more ambitious than other sportspeople he has encountered.
- B They are willing to put in huge amounts of preparation for challenges.
- C They use arguments that non-climbers can't easily understand.
- D They don't deliberately seek out very difficult challenges.

35 What point is made in the fifth paragraph?

- A Extreme athletes use techniques other people don't use.
- B Most people lack the focus required to do extreme sports.
- C A certain state of mind makes attempting an activity more likely.
- D Non-athletes are probably wise not to try extreme sports.

36 What does the article as a whole tell us?

- A Those who take risks are more likely to be successful in life.
- B Taking part in extreme sports is not as difficult as people think.
- C Extreme athletes are driven by a need to be better than others.
- D Risk-taking is something you either naturally want to do or avoid.