

**Exercise 3**

Read the article about a rowing race called the Atlantic Challenge, and then complete the notes.

Atlantic Challenge

Are you interested in extreme sports? Here's an example for you – the Atlantic Challenge. This involves crossing the Atlantic Ocean in a rowing boat, and you can choose to do it solo, or in a small team. It has been described as the world's toughest rowing race.

I first came across this event when I saw a newspaper report about a 23-year-old woman from the UK who set a new record in 2023 for completing the race solo. She rowed for 59 days, 16 hours and 36 minutes, beating the previous record by two hours and 38 minutes. But then I discovered that she isn't the youngest person to take part in the race – the minimum age is 18, and I read about at least two teenagers who have successfully completed the challenge.

The race begins in La Gomera, in the Canary Islands, in December each year. Meeting the other competitors before setting off is reported to be one of the more memorable aspects of the race – everyone has the same objective, which is preparing to row 3000 miles across the Atlantic to the finishing point in Antigua. Personally, I can't imagine being able to do this, not only due to the extreme physical challenge, but because of the mental challenge too. Successful participants admit that it is really tough, and during the race, you can't accept any kind of support, but many have experiences that more than make up for this – seeing whales swimming beside the boat is one example. Most participants are extremely well prepared, though, with specially designed boats to travel in, and they have all sorts of technology on board. Even so, if something goes wrong, you are responsible for carrying out repairs yourself. Of course, if that isn't possible, you will need to be rescued, so having insurance is an essential requirement.

When I read about the race, the fastest team to have crossed the Atlantic was a four-man team, who finished in just over 29 days. But no matter how long it takes, spotting land in the distance towards the end of the race is something that gives all participants a huge boost. By that point, some might be running low on supplies of food – there is limited space on board, and another regulation is to take everything you need for the entire journey. There isn't much time to cook and clean when the daily routine consists of three main tasks – rowing, eating and sleeping. Competitors tend to row for two hours at a time, then sleep for two hours, and they try to keep this up twenty-four hours a day. If that doesn't sound appealing, then rowing into the sunset might tempt you – that's what several competitors have said was truly unforgettable. I have to admit that it's something I'm very unlikely to experience. But what about you?



Question 9

Highlights of the Atlantic Challenge:

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[Total: 7]

