

## 20 One Man in a Boat

Fishing is my favourite sport. I often fish for hours without catching anything. But this does not worry me. Some fishermen are unlucky. Instead of catching fish, they catch old boots and rubbish. I am even less lucky. I never catch anything—not even old boots. After having spent whole mornings on the river, I always go home with an empty bag. 'You must give up fishing!' my friends say. 'It's a waste of time.' But they don't realize one important thing. I'm not really interested in fishing. I am only interested in sitting in a boat and doing nothing at all!



### Comprehension Précis and Composition

Answer these questions in not more than 50 words.

1. What is the writer's favourite sport?
2. What do some unlucky fishermen catch?
3. Is the writer as lucky as they are, or is he not so lucky?
4. Does he ever catch anything?
5. Is he really interested in fishing?
6. What is the only thing that interests him?

### Key Structures

You must give up fishing.

Study these sentences carefully. Pay close attention to the verbs in *italics*. All these verbs end in *-ing*.

a *Eating* is always a pleasure.

*Watching* television is my favourite pastime.

*Reading* in bed is something I always enjoy.

b I am very keen on *cycling*.

She is afraid of *staying* in that house alone.

He is capable of *doing* anything.

c Note how these sentences have been joined:

He sat there. He did not say anything.

He sat there without *saying* anything.

He turned off the radio. He left the room.

Before *leaving* the room, he turned off the radio.

He looked at his watch. He hurried to the station.

After *looking* at his watch, he hurried to the station.

Or: After *having looked* at his watch, he hurried to the station.

I must apologize. I interrupted you.

I must apologize for *interrupting* you.

Or: I must apologize for *having interrupted* you.

I must apologize. I did not let you know earlier.

I must apologize for *not letting* you know earlier.

*Or*: I must apologize for *not having let* you know earlier.  
He congratulated me. I won the competition.  
He congratulated me on *winning* the competition.  
*Or*: He congratulated me on *having won* the competition.

### Exercises

A. Underline all the verbs in the passage that end in *-ing*.

B. Give the correct form of the verbs in brackets. Do not refer to the passage until you finish the exercise:

(Fish) is my favourite sport. I often fish for hours without (catch) anything. But this does not worry me. Some fishermen are unlucky. Instead of (catch) fish, they catch old boots and rubbish. I am even less lucky. I never catch anything—not even old boots. After (have spend) whole mornings on the river, I always go home with an empty bag. ‘You must give up (fish)!’ my friends say. ‘It’s a waste of time.’ But they don’t realize one important thing. I’m not really interested in (fish). I am only interested in (sit) in a boat and (do) nothing at all!

C. Join these pairs of sentences with the words given in brackets. Make any other necessary changes.

1. He went out of the restaurant. (without) He did not pay the bill.
2. She bought a pair of boots. (instead of) She did not get a pair of shoes.
3. She was afraid. (of) She did not spend the night alone.
4. (After) She heard the news. She fainted.
5. Think carefully. (before) Answer my question.
6. (On) I saw the plane coming towards me. I dashed for cover.

## Special Difficulties

### Words Often Confused

*a* Interested and Interesting. Excited and Exciting.

Study these examples:

Fishing is not interesting. I am not really interested in fishing. (l. 12)

The match was very exciting. The crowd got very excited.

*b* It’s and Its. It’s a waste of time. (ll. 10–11)

Study these examples:

It’s (=it is) cold today. It’s raining too.

The cat drank its milk.

This engine has lost its power.

*c* Realize and Understand. They don’t realize . . . (l. 11)

Study these examples:

I realized he was mad.

He didn’t realize that he had made a mistake.

I don’t understand English.

### Exercise

Choose the correct words in the following:

1. I (realized) (understood) he was not telling me the truth.
2. This poem is difficult. (It’s) (Its) impossible for you to (understand) (realize) (its) (it’s) meaning
3. There was some (excited) (exciting) news on the radio.
4. He is not an (interesting) (interested) person.
5. He is an explorer. He leads an (excited) (exciting) life.
6. I am not (interesting) (interested) in other people’s affairs.