

- 1) Read the article and answer the questions.



## Comic marathon man raises £200,000

To the cheering of taxi drivers and the honking of horns, the comedian and actor Eddie Izzard ran into London yesterday to complete his 43rd marathon in 52 days. In total he had covered 1,100 miles.

Fighting blisters that have caused the nails on his smaller toes to fall off and his larger toes to swell into 'alien monsters', he ran up The Mall and into Trafalgar Square where he had started 7½ weeks ago.

In finishing he proved what many thought was an impossible task: that a 47-year-old comedian with no sporting experience could do something a top athlete might find difficult.

His 43 marathons were in aid of the charity *Sports Relief*, which raises money for the poor all over the world. So far Izzard has raised more than £200,000.

After only six weeks' training he started out on a journey that would take him to every corner of the British Isles. 'The first three weeks were the hardest,' he said. The non-stop pressure on his body led to sleepless nights and he would wake exhausted with 'blisters on top of blisters'.

But the people he met along the way cheered him up. 'People stopped their cars and cheered, they gave me money and food.'

More than 500,000 people 'followed' the comedian, in a different sense, on Twitter. Running into London he looked lean and muscular. 'Everyone says my legs look very good but I thought they looked quite good beforehand,' he said.

Simon Blease, 51, a sports doctor and mountain runner who has been following his progress, was waiting on Tower Bridge. 'I didn't think he could do it,' he said. 'Like a lot of people I thought he would have a good try, but his body would break down. Someone with so little training, I find it extraordinary that he has done it.'

Asked what he had gained, Izzard said: 'I know now I can do that. Sport is one of those words that stopped being part of my life when I was about 14. Sporting success was not something I ever associated myself with.' He now plans to continue jogging and hopes to inspire others into sport.

He then excused himself – to take an ice bath. 'I'm going to have a party somewhere that is dry and then I'm going to sleep for a week,' he said.

- What is Izzard's age and usual job?
- What was marathon-running in aid of?
- How much training did he do for the marathon?
- What effect did the run have on his body?
- How did it change his view of himself?

- 2) Write your opinion.

- Do you think his run is likely to inspire others? Why/Why not?
- What other big charity events do you know about/have you participated in?
- Do you think that raising money for charity can make a real difference to people's lives? Why/Why not?

3) Look at the image and answer.

a) What can you see in the photo?

b) Do you think this is an effective way to make things change?



4) Put the words and phrases in the box under the following headings. More than one answer may be possible.

- Environment
- Global economic issues
- Global political issues
- Health

climate change - conflict - cure - debt(s) - disease - fair trade - global warming - intensive farming - mortality rate - organic farming - peace - pollution - poverty - recycling - solar power - standard of living - war - wealth

5) Complete the sentences with words and phrases from exercise 4.

- a) \_\_\_\_\_ caused by cars and factories contributes to \_\_\_\_\_. What do you think can or should be done about it?
- b) People argue that \_\_\_\_\_ is better for the environment and healthier, but \_\_\_\_\_ produces more food. Which do you think is better?
- c) Are you happy to pay a bit extra to buy goods which are \_\_\_\_\_? Why/ Why not?
- d) Do you think that doctors will find the \_\_\_\_\_ for many \_\_\_\_\_, such as cancer?
- e) Do you think that poorer countries should be forced to pay their \_\_\_\_\_? Why/ Why not?

6) Write your opinion about the questions in exercise 5.