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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## 6 Minute English

### Mermaiding



*This is not a word-for-word transcript*

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**Rob**

Welcome to 6 Minute English, the programme where we explore an interesting topic and bring you some useful items vocabulary. I'm Rob.

**Neil**

And I'm Neil.

**Rob**

Now Neil, I know you're a keen swimmer.

**Neil**

I am. I try to get to the pool once a week and do a few lengths, yes.

**Rob**

That's good to hear because swimming is one of the best sports for keeping fit. It's an aerobic exercise – **aerobic** means a very active type of exercise that makes your heart and lungs stronger. The opposite of this is anaerobic – and for my question today Neil, I wonder if you know which of these activities is an example of anaerobic exercise?

- a) weightlifting
- b) kickboxing
- c) dancing

**Neil**

I don't have a clue but I'll pick my favourite sport – a) weightlifting.

**Rob**

Is that really your favourite sport?! Anyway, we'll find out the answer at the end of the programme.

**Neil**

So what about you Rob – do you visit the swimming pool very often?

**Rob**

Only to use the cafe! I don't like anything **aquatic** – I mean connected to water. I just don't like getting wet - and swimming up and down a pool is just boring!

**Neil**

Well there are alternatives to plain swimming. There's **synchronised** swimming...

**Rob**

Synchronised – that's moving together at the same time or speed as someone else. Like dancing in water I suppose? Hmm, I'm not a good dancer either.

**Neil**

How about the new craze of 'mermaiding' which is making a splash at the moment – in other words becoming very popular. The idea originated in America but is now popular in the UK and Europe.

**Rob**

OK. Tell me more!

**Neil**

Let's hear from an expert – Emma Longden, who's founder of Fin2Fit – which runs classes, teaching the skills of swimming safely like a mermaid...

**Emma Longden, founder, Fin2Fit**

Mermaiding is putting a monofin on your feet. Putting a beautiful tail on and getting in the water and swimming like a mermaid.

**Rob**

OK, so I would need to wear a monofin – the prefix '**mono**' means 'only one or single' – so a single fin –that's like a mermaid's tail - then I just get in the water and swim like a mermaid – I'm not so sure about that Neil – I don't really know how mermaids swim!

**Neil**

There's more to it than that Rob. It's actually good for your fitness as Emma can explain...

**Emma Longden, founder, Fin2Fit**

It gives children's confidence in water a boost, it improves their water strength, it gives you an entire body workout. It works your cardiovascular system, it works your legs, your core – it improves the children's swimming technique, flexibility, balance, co-ordination – you get the reward, you get the social aspect – and alongside all of that, they're learning vital life skills along the way.

**Neil**

So there are many benefits to mermaiding Rob. Improving confidence, strength, technique and it's good for your cardiovascular system – **cardiovascular** relates to your heart and blood vessels.

**Rob**

I like the sound of the **social** aspect – and by that Emma means being with other people and having fun. It's an activity that's sociable. And it teaches life skills – useful skills that help you deal with everyday challenges. Well that's great for kids – and that's the problem.

**Neil**

What's that?

**Rob**

Mermaiding is for kids – so I can't get involved – even if I wanted to... can I?

**Neil**

You can Rob. According to Emma, it's growing in popularity with adults too – any excuse to live out your fantasies hey!

**Emma Longden, founder, Fin2Fit**

There are so many adults that actually kind of want to live out their childhood dreams that they wanted to be a mermaid when they were children and they didn't get the opportunity and now it's here and now it's available and... So yes, we do a lot of adult classes as well.

**Neil**

There you go Rob – living out your childhood dreams – that doing things you wanted to do when you were a child. Like being a mermaid!

**Rob**

Sorry Neil, that wasn't a dream for me – although I did dream of swimming like a shark once! Anyway, mermaiding is a good form of aerobic exercise – but earlier I asked you what an example of anaerobic exercise is. Is it...

- a) weightlifting
- b) kickboxing
- c) dancing

**Neil**

I said weightlifting. Was I right?

**Rob**

You were Neil, well done. Any exercise that consists of short exertion, high-intensity movement is an anaerobic exercise – such as weight lifting, sprinting and jumping. I won't go into scientific detail – but aerobics exercise is done over a longer period of time and strengthens the heart and lungs, thereby improving the body's utilisation of oxygen.

**Neil**

Thanks for that Rob. Now I think we should sprint through our recap of some of the words we've talked about today – starting with '**aerobic**', which you just explained. "Mermaiding is a good aerobic workout."

**Rob**

Assuming you don't mind dressing up! Next we had '**aquatic**' which refers to something connected with water. "Synchronised swimming is an example of an aquatic sport."

**Neil**

Ah, you slipped in another of our words there – '**synchronised**' – which means 'moving together at the same time or speed as someone or something else'. "We synchronised our watches so that we all arrived at the same time."

**Rob**

Good idea – you're always late Neil. Then we mentioned '**mono**' which means 'one' or 'single' and is used as a prefix on words such as 'monochrome' – one colour – or 'monorail' – a train running on a single track.

**Neil**

Then we heard the word '**cardiovascular**' - a word that relates to the effect on your heart and lungs. "Experts say those who quit smoking could also quickly reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease."

**Rob**

Finally, we also mentioned '**social**' – this adjective relates to activities that you do with other people and are usually fun. "Now I live in London, I have a great social life."

**Neil**

Well you never invite me out Rob! Anyway, that's it for this edition of 6 Minute English. Before you rush off to fulfil your dream of being a mermaid, don't forget to visit our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube pages, and of course our website!

**Rob**

Yes and that's at [bbclearningenglish.com](http://bbclearningenglish.com). Bye for now.

**Neil**

Goodbye.