

Exercise 2

Read the article about four people (**A–D**) who enjoy wild swimming. Then answer **Questions 7(a)–(i)**.

Wild swimming

Swimming outdoors in rivers, lakes and the sea

A Conor

Recently, I was looking through old photos of family summer holidays in Scotland – there were pictures of us all swimming in the clear blue sea, with the sun blazing overhead. I clearly remembered the freezing temperature of the water, which certainly isn't the impression given by the images! I've always been a keen swimmer, though I admit that most of the year I go to the local sports centre where I can swim indoors. I'm definitely a seasonal wild swimmer – when it's warm enough, I head to my local river for an evening swim. Without exception, I emerge feeling more positive than when I got in. Occasionally friends join me – I talk about it so much that they've come along to see for themselves what it's like. I must admit though that it's the occasions when I have only myself for company that I appreciate the most.

B Emine

Swimming is so good for you, both physically and mentally, whether you're swimming indoors or out in nature. I live by the coast, and have a few favourite spots nearby for swimming. I tend not to reveal them though, as regular swimmers like me value our private places! I love swimming out from the beach, watching birds fly overhead. I try to go as often as I can – it's only when it's too windy that I'll accept it's not wise to swim in the sea. But otherwise, you'll find me out there most times of the year, sometimes even in the winter months when the thought of getting into cold water isn't the most appealing. If you've never tried it before, the trick is to get into the water slowly, let your body get used to it, and then warm up as quickly as possible when you get out.

C Omar

My first experience of wild swimming was in my teens. My friend and I were on a boat near an island, and although I'd never swum in the sea before, it was such a hot sunny day that I didn't hesitate to jump in. Talking to my friend about it recently, I said I could almost imagine the wonderful cool water around me. What I had to be reminded of was my concern at the time about what creatures might have been in the deep water beneath me! That thought doesn't bother me anymore, and I'll happily swim in the sea whenever I have the chance. I swim indoors regularly too, but given the choice between fresh air and chemicals, I know which I'd go for. Sometimes I swim on my own; other times I meet up with a group to try a different location. I love finding new places!

D Ana

I'm a member of a wild-swimming club – there are about twelve of us now, and we range in age from sixteen to over seventy! We meet up almost every week. I also have a blog about it, so if anyone wants to join us, they can find out where to go. Some people prefer to keep their favourite swimming places secret, but I'm a believer in sharing information with anyone else who's interested. As far as I'm concerned, it doesn't matter how cold or wet it is – I'll turn up. There have been some occasions when I've been the only one there, and I admit that I'll still go in on my own, though I'm well aware that's not a good idea. Recently we were doing a coast swim, when a seal popped up right next to me. It was a magical moment, and not one I was expecting at all!

Question 7

Which person ...

- (a) suggests why wild swimming is better than swimming in a pool? [1]
- (b) explains why they avoid saying where they swim? [1]
- (c) says that they prefer to go wild swimming alone? [1]
- (d) mentions that they were surprised to see some wildlife while swimming? [1]
- (e) describes the effect that wild swimming has on their state of mind? [1]
- (f) says that they will go wild swimming whatever the weather? [1]
- (g) suggests that a memory of wild swimming might have been inaccurate? [1]
- (h) gives some advice for people who are new to wild swimming? [1]
- (i) suggests that they have done something risky when wild swimming? [1]

[Total: 9]