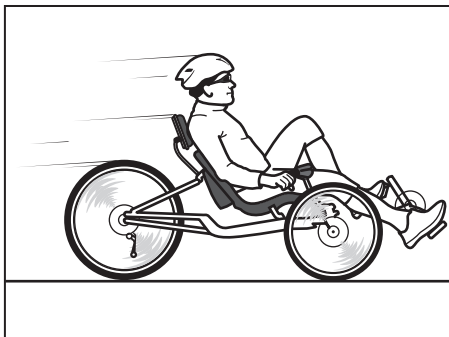


**Exercise 3**

Read the article about a type of bicycle called a recumbent bike, and then complete the notes.

Recumbent bikes

Bicycles are one of the most popular forms of transport, and have been for many years, but have you ever heard of, or seen, a recumbent bike? Recumbent bikes are extremely comfortable to ride compared to standard bicycles. Instead of sitting upright with legs going straight down, the rider lies back with their legs pointing forward to pedals which are in front of them.

Traditional bicycles have changed little in their overall appearance for well over a hundred years; a bicycle from the 1920s looks surprisingly similar to one you might see around town today. You might think recumbent bikes are a recent development of a standard bicycle, but they were actually invented a long time ago. However, apart from a brief period of popularity in the 1930s, they have never really become a common sight on our roads and cycle paths.

So why is this the case? Well, that's harder to answer than you might imagine, as recumbent bikes have a lot to offer and there are only a handful of disadvantages associated with them. For example, they require relatively little effort to ride, thanks to the sitting position of the rider. The large seat that makes this possible, however, means that they weigh a lot, which does put some people off. Despite this, when riders that are new to cycling on recumbent bikes have got used to their machines, they find that they are very rapid, at least along flat roads. It's a different story on slopes, though, because one thing riders of recumbent bikes notice is that it's tricky to cycle up hills on them. This is because it's impossible to stand up on the pedals, which you can do when riding a traditional bicycle.

Experts have compared the physical effects on riders of using recumbent bikes and traditional bicycles. Their conclusions were that the levels of fitness that can be achieved by the rider are exactly the same for both. However, riding recumbent bikes puts less stress on the body, due to the position of the rider.

Anyone considering purchasing a recumbent bike needs to bear a few things in mind. Firstly, recumbent bikes are not a practical choice for cycling through busy city streets. So if that is your aim, then it's probably best to get a traditional model rather than a recumbent. The reason for this is that although they can be stopped very quickly, which is often a requirement for staying safe in urban environments, it's difficult for motorists to spot recumbent bikes, even if they're checking reasonably carefully for other road users. Whichever kind of bicycle you finally decide to buy, be sure to get plenty of advice, preferably from an experienced bicycle dealer, before making that final choice.



Question 8

The advantages of recumbent bikes:

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