

High-level Performance

In the 1960 Rome Olympics an unknown Ethiopian runner called Abebe Bikila stunned the world when he won the marathon barefoot. Some people say that if he'd worn running shoes, he wouldn't have won. He didn't wear shoes because he wanted to feel relaxed on roads as he did running up and down hills at home in the Rift Valley. Four years later at the Tokyo Olympics he won the marathon again, this time breaking the world record and winning by an incredible margin of four minutes.

Since then African runners, mainly from the Rift Valley and Ethiopia, have dominated the world records in every distance from 800 meters to the marathon. Their superiority is so great that other nations can no longer keep up. In the USA, for example, road-running races that are now being held, either exclude foreigners from prize money or are for American runners only.

It is not surprising that Rift Valley athletes have an advantage over European and North American Athletes. One reason is that they live and train at high altitudes. Oxygen levels fall the further you go above sea level and the body compensates for this in several ways: the lungs get bigger, the red blood cells increase and the circulation improves. In addition to this, the Rift Valley athletes have a lean physical build and have been trained from childhood to run several miles to school every day.

Although these athletes clearly thrive on high-altitude training, it is not clear that people born and raised at sea level benefit from this type of training. In 1998 the British athlete Sebastian Coe spent weeks training in the mountains. When he returned to Britain immediately afterwards to compete for a place in the Olympic team, he suffered from the side effects of the change of altitude. He was sick, dizzy and weak and he wasn't selected. He would probably have had a better chance if he had allowed time for his body to re-acclimatize to running at sea level.

But there are other reasons why the Rift Valley runners dominate middle- and long-distance running. The first is tradition. Young people are deeply inspired by the great runners of the 1960s such as Abebe Bikila, Kip Keino and Ben Jipcho. In the USA young people want to be basketball players like Michael Jordan; in Britain they want to be footballers like David Beckham or Michael Owen; but in Kenya and Ethiopia they want to be runners like Daniel Komen and Haile Gebrselassie.

The second is hunger for success. Now that athletics is a professional sport, it has become a way out of the poverty trap for many Africans. Running has become the passport to fame and fortune for the Rift Valley runners in the same way football, basketball or boxing are in many others.

(Adapted from Abbs, B., Freebairn, I. and Barker, C., 2000. Snapshot Intermediate Students' Book. Harlow: Longman.)

Part I

A. Choose the correct evidence for the following statements (quotes from the text).

1. **Running shoeless was what likely made Bikila win the 1960 Olympics.**
 - a) “Abebe Bikila stunned the world when he won the marathon barefoot.”
 - b) “He didn’t wear shoes because he wanted to feel relaxed on roads as he did running up and down hills at home in the Rift Valley.”
 - c) “Some people say that if he’d worn running shoes, he wouldn’t have won.”
 - d) “Four years later at the Tokyo Olympics he won the marathon (...)”
2. **African runners are being excluded from races overseas.**
 - a) “In the USA, for example, road-running races are now being held that either exclude foreigners from prize money or are for American runners only.”
 - b) “It is not surprising that Rift Valley athletes have an advantage over European and North American Athletes.”
 - c) “Their superiority is so great that other nations can no longer keep up.”
 - d) “Since then African runners, mainly from the Rift Valley and Ethiopia, have dominated the world records (...)”
3. **To adapt to a less oxygenated environment our physiology changes.**
 - a) “One reason is that they live and train at high altitudes.”
 - b) “Oxygen levels fall the further you go above sea level and the body compensates for this in several ways.”
 - c) “(...) the Rift Valley athletes have a lean physical build and have been trained from childhood to run several miles (...)”
 - d) “(...) he suffered from the side effects of the change of altitude.”
4. **It is uncertain if mountain training is beneficial to people other than its own.**
 - a) “(...) it is not clear that people born and raised at sea level benefit from this type of training.”
 - b) “In 1998 the British athlete Sebastian Coe spent weeks training in the mountains.”
 - c) “When he returned to Britain immediately afterwards to compete for a place in the Olympic team, he suffered from the side effects of the change of altitude.”
 - d) “He would probably have had a better chance if he had allowed time for his body to reacclimatize to running at sea level.
5. **Sebastian Coe would have likely performed better if he had given time for his organism to adapt.**
 - a) “(...) British athlete Sebastian Coe spent weeks training in the mountains.”
 - b) “When he returned to Britain immediately afterwards to compete for a place in the Olympic team, he suffered from the side effects of the change of altitude.”
 - c) “He was sick, dizzy and weak and he wasn’t selected.”
 - d) “He would probably have had a better chance if he had allowed time for his body to reacclimatize (...)”

B. Choose the equivalents/synonyms for the following words or expressions.

1. “(...) Abebe Bikila **stunned** the world (...)”
 - e) astonished
 - f) let down
 - g) showed up
 - h) represented

2. “(...) the Rift Valley athletes have a **lean** physical build (...)”
 - i) fat
 - j) muscular
 - k) slender
 - l) light

3. “(...) He was sick, **dizzy** and weak and he wasn’t selected.”
 - m) confused
 - n) steady
 - o) unconscious
 - p) light-headed

4. “Although these athletes clearly **thrive** on high-altitude training (...)”
 - q) flounder
 - r) prosper
 - s) struggle
 - t) live

5. “(...) the body **compensates for** this in several ways (...)”
 - u) repairs for
 - v) adapts to
 - w) rewards for
 - x) improves for

C. Choose the most suitable way to complete the sentences according to the ideas expressed in the text.

1. Rift Valley athletes are superior...

- a) in only 800 metres distance.
- b) in middle- to long-distance running.
- c) in long-distance running only.
- d) in short- to long-distance running.

2. High-altitude training increases...

- a) blood oxygenation and circulation.
- b) leg muscles and lung size.
- c) brain activity.
- d) Rift Valley athlete's maximum speed.

3. When people not used to altitude training return to sea level...

- a) they might feel disturbed.
- b) they can re-acclimatize their bodies to running at sea level.
- c) they might have a brief performance peak.
- d) they can get ill and underperform.

4. Rift Valley athletes not only dominate due to high altitude training but also...

- a) due to their willingness to be famous, just to show off.
- b) because they are inspired by young people.
- c) because of their tradition and athletics being paid as a professional sport.
- d) Because they re-acclimatize faster to run at sea level.

5. 1960s runners from Rift Valley...

- a) are more famous than basketball and football players.
- b) won marathons with shoes on.
- c) are an inspiration for younger people like other nations high-performance athletes.
- d) would spend months training at sea level.

D. Choose the most suitable word to complete the sentences below.

Deserts contain large amounts of (1) _____ when compared to the amounts they hold in surface stores such as lakes and rivers. But only a small (2) _____ of groundwater enters the (3) _____ cycle feeding the flows of streams, maintaining lake levels, and being recharged (or refilled) (4) _____ surface flows and rainwater.

Groundwater is stored (5) _____ the pore spaces and joints of rocks and unconsolidated (unsolidified) sediments or in the openings widened through (6) _____ and weathering. The water-saturated rock or sediment is (7) _____ as an “aquifer”. Because they are porous, sedimentary rocks, such as sandstones and conglomerates, are important potential (8) _____ of groundwater. Large quantities of water may also be stored in limestones when joints and cracks have been (9) _____ to form cavities. Most limestone and sandstone (10) _____ are deep and extensive but may contain groundwater that are not being recharged.

(Adapted from 2016. Official TOEFL IBT Tests: Volume 2. McGraw Hill Education.)

1 .

- a) river water
- b) groundwater
- c) surface-water
- d) rainwater

2 .

- a) piece
- b) share
- c) fragment
- d) fraction

3 .

- a) main
- b) fluid
- c) water
- d) hydrological

4 .

- a) through
- b) over
- c) along
- d) between

5 .

- a) in
- b) at
- c) by
- d) on

6 .

- a) breaks
- b) patches
- c) fractures
- d) flaws

7 .

- a) told
- b) known
- c) said
- d) understood

8 .

- a) sources
- b) roots
- c) beginnings
- d) springs

9 .

- a) reduced
- b) waned
- c) decreased
- d) enlarged

10 .

- a) rivers
- b) springs
- c) aquifers
- d) wells

Part II

A. Choose from the given options the correct verb tense/ form to fill in the blanks:

- 1 . The development of larger planes in the 1950s and 60s _____ down the cost of air travel.
 - a) brings
 - b) brought
 - c) had brought
 - d) is bringing

- 2 . Sensory structures _____ from the heads of some invertebrates are called antennae.
 - a) are growing
 - b) they are growing
 - c) that grow
 - d) grow

- 3 . The safflower plant is grown chiefly for the oil _____ from its seeds.
 - a) obtained
 - b) is obtaining
 - c) which obtains it
 - d) obtaining it

- 4 . This led to the business of tourism that we _____ today.
 - a) are seeing
 - b) see
 - c) saw
 - d) have seen

- 5 . During the flood of 1927, the Red Cross, operating out of emergency headquarters in Mississippi, _____ temporary shelters for the homeless.
 - a) have set up
 - b) will set up
 - c) has set up
 - d) set up

- 6 . Technology will play a key role in _____ future life styles.
 - a) shaping
 - b) to shape
 - c) shape of
 - d) shaped

7 . This was not possible for someone with only a couple of weeks' vacation allowance. With the advent of cheaper air travel, foreign destinations _____ accessible in a way they had never been before.

- a) becomes
- b) became
- c) are becoming
- d) did become

8 . We didn't see him because he _____ when we arrived.

- a) had already left
- b) left already
- c) has already left
- d) already left

9 . I _____ to the supermarket. Do you want anything?

- a) will go
- b) am going
- c) go
- d) went

10 . If he had wanted to come, he _____ us.

- a) will have told
- b) would have told
- c) will tell
- d) told

Part III

A. Identify and mark the word or expression that is incorrect.

- 1 . Guppies are sometimes A) call rainbow B) fish C) due to the D) bright colors of the males.
a) A
b) B
c) C
d) D
- 2 . One of North America's A) most renowned B) painters, Grandma Moses was in her seventies when C) her began to paint D) seriously.
a) A
b) B
c) C
d) D
- 3 . The novelty, relatively high speed, and A) advantageously of year-round service B) made early C) passenger trains a popular D) form of transportation.
a) A
b) B
c) C
d) D
- 4 . A) Because incomplete records, the B) number of enlistments in the Confederate army C) has long been D) in dispute.
a) A
b) B
c) C
d) D
- 5 . Estuaries are A) highly sensitive and ecologically B) important habitats, C) providing breeding and feeding grounds for D) much life forms.
a) A
b) B
c) C
d) D
- 6 . A) When the temperature drops B) below 68 degrees Fahrenheit, the body conserves C) warm by D) restricting blood flowing to the skin.
a) A
b) B
c) C
d) D

- 7 . The political and A) economic life of the state of Rhode Island B) was dominated by the owners of textile mills C) well into the D) twenty century.
- a) A
 - b) B
 - c) C
 - d) D
- 8 . The A) first national park B) in world, Yellowstone National Park, C) was established D) in 1872.
- a) A
 - b) B
 - c) C
 - d) D
- 9 . Scientists at A) universities are B) often more C) involved in theoretical research than in D) practically research.
- a) A
 - b) B
 - c) C
 - d) D
- 10 . The nonviolent protest A) advocated by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., B) proving highly effective in an age of C) expanding television news D) coverage.
- a) A
 - b) B
 - c) C
 - d) D