

The London Marathon

Before you read

- 1 Look at the website for a famous sports event. What type of event are the people participating in? Do you think they are all professional athletes? Why/Why not?

Reading

- 2 Read the information from the website for the marathon. How many years ago did the two sportsmen start the event?

RUN FOR CHARITY!

History of the Marathon

The London Marathon is one of the biggest running events in the world, and it is one of the five top world marathons that make up the World Marathon Majors competition which has a \$1 million prize. It has taken place each spring in London since 1981. The race is currently sponsored by Virgin Money, as the 'Virgin London Marathon'.

The former Olympic champion and sports journalist Chris Brasher and the Welsh athlete John Disley founded the London Marathon and since the first race in 1981 there haven't been many changes to their original route around the River Thames. The race begins at three separate points around Blackheath and finishes in The Mall, next to St. James's Park.

In addition to being one of the top five international marathons run over the traditional distance of 42,195 kilometres, the London Marathon is also a big sporting festival and charity event. Since 1981 the event has raised over £557 million for charity and it holds the Guinness world record as the largest annual fundraising event in the world, with 78% of the participants in 2011 running for charity and raising a total of £51.8 million!

Charity listings
If you want to receive fundraising information from charities, or you are interested in running the 2012 Virgin London Marathon for charity, please browse through our charity listings to find your chosen charity and get in touch. [Find out more.](#)

- 3 Read the statements and write T (true) or F (false), then correct the false statements.

- 1 The prize for the London marathon is \$1 million. _____
- 2 The race takes place in winter. _____
- 3 There have been a lot of changes to the route of the race over the years. _____
- 4 The race finishes at Buckingham Palace. _____
- 5 It is the largest fundraising event in the world. _____
- 6 The Virgin company helps participants to organise the fundraising part of the event. _____

4 Find these numbers in the text.

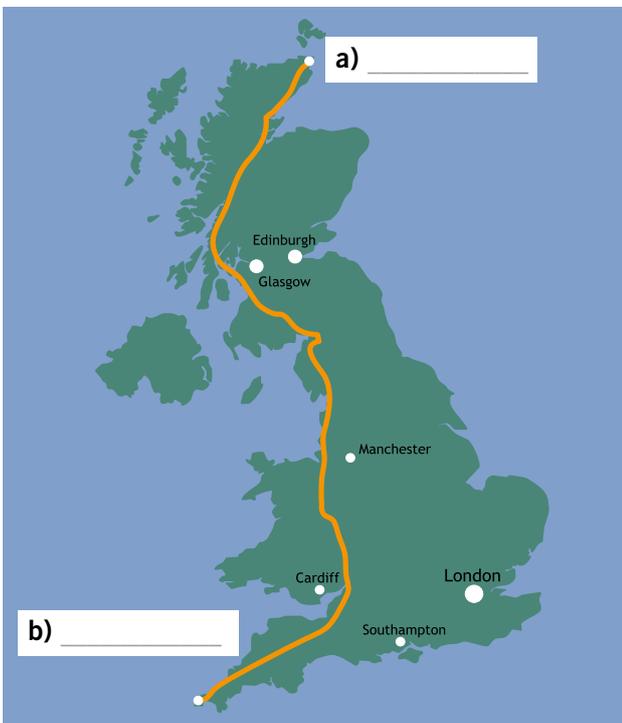
What do they refer to?

- 1981 (1) _____
- 42,195 (2) _____
- 557 million (3) _____
- 78% (4) _____
- 51.8 million (5) _____

- 4 They've asked people to sponsor them...
- a 50 pounds a kilometre
 - b 15 pence a kilometre
 - c 50 pence a kilometre
- 5 Their friend Carol is going to go with them to...
- a raise money.
 - b transport their luggage.
 - c give medical help.
- 6 During the trip the women have decided to stay in...
- a campsites.
 - b bed and breakfasts.
 - c hospitals.

Listening

5  **9** Listen to the radio programme and write on the map the names of the places the two women are starting at and finishing at on their route.



Speaking

7 Have you ever participated in a sponsored event in your area? In pairs, ask and answer about the event using these prompts:

- Type of event?
- Where?
- How much money/ask from/sponsors?
- Successful?
- How much money/raise/from event?

- A *What type of sponsored event was it?*
 B *It was a sponsored swim.*

STUDY SKILLS

Writing for a website

Web pages have usually got short paragraphs of text and a lot of titles, labels and highlighting. This makes them quick and easy to read. They often contain photos, illustrations and maps to make them very visual. Most of them have a menu along the top, or down the side, to help users choose the different types of information they need. The style of your writing for a website text should be short, informative and factual.

6  **9** **P** Listen to the interview again and choose the correct answers (✓).

- 1 Jane and Pat are going on their special trip by...
 - a bus.
 - b tandem.
 - c bike.
- 2 The money they raise is going to...
 - a Jane's husband.
 - b a local hospital.
 - c a local gym.
- 3 The two friends met...
 - a in Cornwall.
 - b at a charity event.
 - c at a class of aerobics.

Writing

8 Work in pairs. Imagine you are organising a sponsored event for charity next month in your town. Design a website to tell people about your event. Include the following information:

- a description of the event (a long walk, a bike ride, a swim, a race...)
- where and when you are going to do it
- which charity you are going to give the money to
- how people can participate
- how people can sponsor the participants
- a map of the route