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Walking-on-water balls could be dangerous

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1104/110404-walking_on_water.html

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THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1104/110404-walking_on_water.html

The giant transparent balls that have become the latest craze in amusement parks and shopping malls may be dangerous. Some safety experts, including the U.S. government, even say they could be deadly. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) "is urging consumers to stop participating in [this] new type of water-related recreational activity, due to the potential risks of suffocation and drowning". The CPSC adds: "The fact that the product has no emergency exit and can be opened only by a person outside of the ball significantly heightens the risk of injury or death when a person inside the ball experiences distress. Pre-existing medical conditions, such as heart, lung, or breathing issues, can be made worse by use of this product."

The water balls were introduced to the world in 2007. They immediately became a huge success because they literally allowed people to walk on water. Manufacturers say there are now thousands across the world. They reject the CPSC's claims and say there is no danger when the water balls are used properly. A spokesperson said they have up to an hour's worth of air inside them so suffocation would never be a problem, especially as operators allow a maximum of five minutes inside the ball at a time. There could be a problem when people purchase the balls for their own use and are left unsupervised. The ball has no emergency exit and cannot be opened from the inside.

WARM-UPS

1. WALKING-ON-WATER BALLS: Walk around the class and talk to other students about walking-on-water balls. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

giant balls / the latest craze / amusement parks / product safety / drowning / risk / huge success / walking on water / manufacturers / spokesperson / suffocation / exit

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. RIDES: Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote (and why). Change and share again.

Ride	Danger level	Fun level
Water balls		
Jet coasters		
Bungee jumps		
Dodgems		
Water slides		
Ghost trains		

4. SAFE: Students A **strongly** believe all amusement park rides will be totally safe one day; Students B **strongly** believe otherwise. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. EXPERIENCES: Which are the best? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- walking on water
- bungee jumping
- zero gravity experiences
- massage
- luxury island resort
- Disneyland
- journey into orbit
- concert

6. TRANSPARENT: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'transparent'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1104/110404-walking_on_water.html

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Giant balls are now very popular in amusement parks. | T / F |
| b. The U.S. government says people should stop using the balls. | T / F |
| c. The water balls have emergency exits but need more. | T / F |
| d. The U.S. government said the balls give people breathing problems. | T / F |
| e. The water balls first came about a decade ago. | T / F |
| f. Manufacturers can see the government body's concerns. | T / F |
| g. There's around an hour of air in each of the balls. | T / F |
| h. The balls cannot be opened by anyone once they are inside them. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. craze | a. lethal |
| 2. experts | b. statements |
| 3. deadly | c. enormous |
| 4. potential | d. limit |
| 5. distress | e. possible |
| 6. huge | f. fad |
| 7. claims | g. buy |
| 8. manufacturers | h. anguish |
| 9. maximum | i. specialists |
| 10. purchase | j. makers |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. become the latest | a. stop participating |
| 2. say they could | b. the ball at a time |
| 3. urging consumers to | c. conditions |
| 4. the potential risks of suffocation | d. to walk on water |
| 5. Pre-existing medical | e. be deadly |
| 6. they literally allowed people | f. for their own use |
| 7. no danger when the water balls | g. craze |
| 8. a maximum of five minutes inside | h. from the inside |
| 9. people purchase the balls | i. and drowning |
| 10. cannot be opened | j. are used properly |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1104/110404-walking_on_water.html

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The giant transparent balls that have become the latest (1) _____ in amusement parks and shopping malls may be dangerous. Some safety (2) _____, including the U.S. government, even say they could be (3) _____. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) "is (4) _____ consumers to stop participating in [this] new type of water-related recreational activity, (5) _____ to the potential risks of suffocation and drowning". The CPSC adds: "The fact that the product has no emergency exit and can be opened only by a person outside of the ball significantly (6) _____ the risk of injury or death when a person inside the ball experiences (7) _____. Pre-existing medical conditions, such as heart, lung, or breathing issues, can be made (8) _____ by use of this product."

heightens
urging
experts
worse
due
craze
distress
deadly

The water balls were introduced to the world in 2007. They immediately became a (9) _____ success because they literally allowed people to walk on water. Manufacturers say there are now thousands across the world. They reject the CPSC's (10) _____ and say there is no danger when the water balls are used (11) _____. A spokesperson said they have up to an hour's (12) _____ of air inside them so suffocation would never be a problem, especially as operators (13) _____ a maximum of five minutes inside the ball at a time. There could be a problem when people (14) _____ the balls for their own use and are left unsupervised. The ball has no emergency (15) _____ and cannot be opened from the (16) _____.

worth
exit
claims
inside
properly
purchase
huge
allow

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1104/110404-walking_on_water.html

The giant transparent balls that have become _____ amusement parks and shopping malls may be dangerous. Some safety experts, including the U.S. government, even say _____. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) "is urging consumers to stop participating in [this] new _____ recreational activity, due to _____ suffocation and drowning". The CPSC adds: "The fact that the product has no emergency exit and can be opened only by a person outside of the ball significantly _____ injury or death when a person inside the ball experiences distress. Pre-existing medical conditions, such as heart, lung, or breathing issues, can be _____ this product."

The water balls were introduced to the world in 2007. They immediately became a huge success because _____ people to walk on water. Manufacturers say there are now thousands across the world. They reject the CPSC's _____ is no danger when the water balls are used properly. A spokesperson said they have up _____ air inside them so suffocation would never be a problem, especially as operators _____ of five minutes inside the ball at a time. There could be a problem when people purchase the _____ use and are left unsupervised. The ball has no emergency exit and cannot be _____.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1104/110404-walking_on_water.html

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'water' and 'ball'.

water	ball
--------------	-------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• giant• experts• consumers• due to• risk• worse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2007• literally• reject• danger• maximum• inside
---	---

STUDENT WATER BALLS SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1104/110404-walking_on_water.html

Write five GOOD questions about walking-on-water balls in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WALKING-ON-WATER BALLS DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'water'?
- c) What do you think of this article?
- d) Have you been inside / would you like to go inside a water ball?
- e) Can you see why they have become the latest craze?
- f) Do you agree with the safety experts?
- g) How can the water balls be made safer?
- h) Do you like trying things like this?
- i) Should people sign a medical form before they get into the water ball?

Walking-on-water balls could be dangerous – 4th April, 2011
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WALKING-ON-WATER BALLS DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What are your favourite amusement park rides?
- c) Do you think it feels like walking on water inside the ball?
- d) Would you worry about a lack of oxygen in the ball?
- e) Do you think the water balls could be used as a competitive sport?
- f) Why do you think there are no emergency exits inside the balls?
- g) Do you think this craze will die out?
- h) What questions would you like to ask a water ball maker?
- i) Should people be able to sue the maker for accidents inside a water ball?

LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1104/110404-walking_on_water.html

The giant (1) ____ balls that have become the latest craze in amusement parks and shopping malls may be dangerous. Some safety experts, including the U.S. government, even say they could be deadly. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) "is (2) ____ consumers to stop participating in [this] new type of water-(3) ____ recreational activity, due to the potential risks of suffocation and drowning". The CPSC adds: "The (4) ____ that the product has no emergency exit and can be opened only by a person outside of the ball significantly (5) ____ the risk of injury or death when a person inside the ball experiences distress. Pre-existing medical conditions, such as heart, lung, or breathing issues, can be made worse (6) ____ use of this product."

The water balls were introduced to the world in 2007. They immediately became a huge success because they (7) ____ allowed people to walk on water. Manufacturers say there are now thousands across the world. They reject the CPSC's (8) ____ and say there is no danger when the water balls are used properly. A spokesperson said they have up to an hour's (9) ____ of air inside them so suffocation would never be a problem, especially (10) ____ operators allow a maximum of five minutes inside the ball (11) ____ a time. There could be a problem when people purchase the balls for their own use and are left unsupervised. The ball has no emergency exit and cannot be opened from the (12) ____.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. | (a) transparent | (b) transparency | (c) apparent | (d) transplant |
| 2. | (a) purging | (b) curbing | (c) urging | (d) refurbishing |
| 3. | (a) relates | (b) relation | (c) relative | (d) related |
| 4. | (a) factual | (b) fact | (c) facet | (d) faucet |
| 5. | (a) highs | (b) heights | (c) heightening | (d) heightens |
| 6. | (a) for | (b) at | (c) by | (d) to |
| 7. | (a) literary | (b) literally | (c) laterally | (d) illiterate |
| 8. | (a) claims | (b) gems | (c) whims | (d) tomes |
| 9. | (a) worth | (b) value | (c) pile | (d) size |
| 10. | (a) has | (b) was | (c) as | (d) is |
| 11. | (a) of | (b) on | (c) in | (d) at |
| 12. | (a) innings | (b) inside | (c) insider | (d) inner |

Walking-on-water balls could be dangerous – 4th April, 2011

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about walking-on-water balls. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. WALKING-ON-WATER BALLS: Make a poster about the walking-on-water balls. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. SAFETY: Write a magazine article about the walking-on-water balls. Include imaginary interviews with people who are for and against them.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to the CEO of a walking-on-water ball maker. Ask him/her three questions about the balls. Give him/her three ideas to make them safer. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T b. T c. F d. F e. F f. F g. T h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1. craze | a. fad |
| 2. experts | b. specialists |
| 3. deadly | c. lethal |
| 4. potential | d. possible |
| 5. distress | e. anguish |
| 6. huge | f. enormous |
| 7. claims | g. statements |
| 8. manufacturers | h. makers |
| 9. maximum | i. limit |
| 10. purchase | j. buy |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. become the latest | a. craze |
| 2. say they could | b. be deadly |
| 3. urging consumers to | c. stop participating |
| 4. the potential risks of suffocation | d. and drowning |
| 5. Pre-existing medical | e. conditions |
| 6. they literally allowed people | f. to walk on water |
| 7. no danger when the water balls | g. are used properly |
| 8. a maximum of five minutes inside | h. the ball at a time |
| 9. people purchase the balls | i. for their own use |
| 10. cannot be opened | j. from the inside |

GAP FILL:

Walking-on-water balls could be dangerous

The giant transparent balls that have become the latest (1) **craze** in amusement parks and shopping malls may be dangerous. Some safety (2) **experts**, including the U.S. government, even say they could be (3) **deadly**. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) "is (4) **urging** consumers to stop participating in [this] new type of water-related recreational activity, (5) **due** to the potential risks of suffocation and drowning". The CPSC adds: "The fact that the product has no emergency exit and can be opened only by a person outside of the ball significantly (6) **heightens** the risk of injury or death when a person inside the ball experiences (7) **distress**. Pre-existing medical conditions, such as heart, lung, or breathing issues, can be made (8) **worse** by use of this product."

The water balls were introduced to the world in 2007. They immediately became a (9) **huge** success because they literally allowed people to walk on water. Manufacturers say there are now thousands across the world. They reject the CPSC's (10) **claims** and say there is no danger when the water balls are used (11) **properly**. A spokesperson said they have up to an hour's (12) **worth** of air inside them so suffocation would never be a problem, especially as operators (13) **allow** a maximum of five minutes inside the ball at a time. There could be a problem when people (14) **purchase** the balls for their own use and are left unsupervised. The ball has no emergency (15) **exit** and cannot be opened from the (16) **inside**.

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - a 2 - c 3 - d 4 - b 5 - d 6 - c 7 - b 8 - a 9 - a 10 - c 11 - d 12 - b