

8 A sporting chance

Language Focus: Vocabulary Sport

1 Describe the activities shown in each photo. In what ways are the people involved taking risks?



2

1 Look at the lists of factors below. Choose the factors which are most and least important for each of the activities shown in the photos, giving reasons.

skill

muscular control
sense of balance
co-ordination
sense of timing

mental qualities

strong nerves
courage
determination
self-control
trust
sensitivity

technology

special clothing
and equipment
back-up support
safety checks

fitness

regular training
special diet
individual fitness
programme
gene traits
individual body
chemistry

2 Can you add any other factors which may be important?

3

Read the headline of the article opposite and look at the accompanying photo and caption. What do you think 'THE EDGE' refers to? Read the article to find out.

4

1 Find **one** phrase from the article which illustrates each of the following ideas.

- the skill of the windsurfer, e.g. '*...he swoops down the front of the wave*'
- the nerve of the windsurfer
- the quality of the technology and equipment involved

2 Match each of the verbs in the box below to one of the following subjects. Then check your answers by referring to the text.

a) the windsurfer b) the sail c) the sea

heaves	powers	accelerates
catapults	hums	leans
rises	snaps	spins
swoops	twists	splashes

3 Which verb(s) in the box suggest(s):

- 1 very rapid, powerful movement?
- 2 an upward movement?
- 3 a circular movement?
- 4 movement accompanied by sound?

WINDSURFING THE EDGE



Catapulted by wind and wave, a windsurfer experiences the thrill of staying in control aboard one of the most high-tech machines there is.

Rocking gently on his board a thousand yards out from shore on the blue-grey waters of the Pacific, Rich Foster is waiting for a wave. Or rather, the wave. Then the sea slowly heaves itself skyward, rising into a mountain of water. Foster leans well back into his harness and as his sail snaps into a tight aerodynamic curve, the wind's energy surges down through his body and into the shark-like board below.

To gain momentum, he swoops down the front of the wave, the nose of the board slicing through the water, and then turns back to power up the steepening cliff.

The sail hums with energy as man and board accelerate through the foamy wave-crest and catapult skyward. Day-Glo sail and board form a pyrotechnic display against the blue sky.

Foster spins and twists in the air, a quick barrel-roll before board and rider splash down safely into the sea to wait for the next wave. Once again he's escaped being thrown into the craggy embrace of the many rocks fringing this Hawaiian beach. For this is windsurfing at the edge: the edge of your skill, the edge of your nerve, and the cutting edge of technology.

5 Work with a partner.

1 Choose one of the photos you discussed in Exercise 1. Use some of the verbs in the box below to help you describe more accurately the type of movement or activity involved.

dive	drive	flash	grasp	hurtle
leap	plummet	shoot	spin	strike
sweep	swerve	wheel	whirl	strain

2 Write a caption for your photo similar to the one used with the picture of the windsurfer. Use these prompts to help you.

Photo 1: nerves/to the limit/racing cyclist/into a corner/last lap/gruelling race

Photo 2: heart pound/striker/swerve round defender/shoot into net/best goal/season

Photo 3: grasp partner/under arms/lift/whirl round/fast spin

6 Interview a partner about his/her attitudes to sport and risk, using these questions as a guide.

- 1 What is your favourite sport, either as a spectator or participant?
- 2 What skills and training does it need? Is any special equipment required? Which of the factors in Exercise 2 are most important?
- 3 What do you think are the main benefits of sport?
 - builds team spirit
 - provides the chance of fame and fortune
 - builds confidence
 - promotes health and fitness
- 4 What do you think is the attraction of sports that are physically dangerous?
- 5 What drives some people to push themselves to 'the edge' of their skill and nerve?