

LEVEL 1

B 1 - B 2

# Have faith in yourself

If you have ever considered yourself not fit to do any sport, the story of the Iron Nun may **change your mind**. A 90-year-old sister Madonna Buder continues **taking part** in triathlons, a sport that involves three disciplines: swimming, cycling and running.

Sister Buder got her nickname because in her career (perhaps the sister would not like to call it so) she has done 340 triathlons, 45 of which were Ironman **competitions**, which no **mere mortal** could survive. An Ironman triathlon requires swimming 3.86km, cycling 180.2km and running 42.195km (a full marathon). Each separate part is a huge achievement. To complete them all **uninterruptedly** one must truly be an Iron Man.

What makes this story even more inspiring is that the humble sister became interested in sport only when she was 47. She took up running after a conversation with a priest who had told her that running harmonizes mind, body and soul. Five years later, she **signed up for** her first triathlon.

Being a Catholic nun since 1953, she learned how to be **faithful** in what she **undertakes**. And so she remained faithful to the discipline. It was because of her that Ironman organisers introduced new age categories: first, 75+ and later - 80+. She did her last Ironman when she was 82, which made her the oldest human to ever complete such a race.

Sister Buder **got so much used to** running and cycling that she mostly uses only these two ways of getting around when she goes to church, school or jail. Yes, a jail. She goes there once a week to pray with the prisoners and talk to them. Lucky **inmates**. These conversations must be life-changing.



## RETELL

What kind of sport does Madonna Buder do? How old is she?

What parts does a triathlon consist of?

Why is Madonna Buder called "The Iron Nun"?

When and why did she take up running?

Why does she visit a jail?



## DISCUSS

You can do any sport even if you are old.



## ARGUMENT BANK

Do any old people try extreme sports like bungee jumping?

Is it easier if you started when you were young?

Do training sessions have to be very intensive?

Are active people over 80 or 90 a standard, or a unique example?

Can you do a sport which requires great agility, e.g. pole vault?

Is it safe for you to try such disciplines when you are old?

# Make notes!

## DEFINITIONS

Put the right letters next to the definitions.

A) to change one's mind; **B) to take part**; C) competition;  
**D) mere mortal**; E) uninterruptedly; **F) to sign up for**;  
G) faithful (to sth); **H) to undertake**; I) to get used to; **J) inmate**

- 1) ordinary person  
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- 2) to change one's decision  
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- 3) to become accustomed  
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- 4) loyal  
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- 5) without any pauses  
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- 6) prisoner  
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- 7) to participate  
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- 8) to enrol  
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- 9) to begin to do sth  
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- 10) contest  
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Write down 5 arguments FOR.



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Write down 5 arguments AGAINST.



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## GAPS

Say/Write full sentences by filling in the gaps with the correct forms of the phrases from the exercise above.

- 1) At first I thought that job was not for me, but then I \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) I have never met anyone more \_\_\_\_\_ to her friends than Alice.
- 3) How did all these \_\_\_\_\_ get to this private concert?!
- 4) It was very hard for me to \_\_\_\_\_ living in Kenya.
- 5) He swam \_\_\_\_\_ for almost half an hour.
- 6) Are you going to \_\_\_\_\_ in the school play?
- 7) I have never \_\_\_\_\_ such a challenging project before!
- 8) I'd like to \_\_\_\_\_ my kids for karate classes.
- 9) Margaret has won in a beauty \_\_\_\_\_!
- 10) The \_\_\_\_\_ decided to break out of prison at dawn.



Write down the words you will use in your essay/speech.

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