**Cambridge English B for the IB Diploma: Teacher resource**

**Audio scripts**

**Audio Track 5**

**Radio host:** Welcome back to this edition of ‘Trends Today’ on Business News Radio. We’re here with sports researcher Alex Weisman, who lectures on a university degree course in – get this – Extreme Sports Management. Mr Weisman – may I call you Alex?

**Alex:** By all means.

**Radio host:** There must be a growing interest in extreme sports if you’re offering a degree in it.

**Alex:** There certainly is. The number of people who practise extreme sports has almost doubled year on year for the past twenty years.

**Radio host:** Are we talking about thousands of people? Millions?

**Alex:** If we look at the five most popular extreme sports, then you’re looking at roughly eighty million people in the world.

**Host:** Wow, that’s a lot of thrill seekers. But just to clarify, what is an ‘extreme’ sport? Can you give us some examples of ‘extreme’ sports?

**Alex:** There’s no official definition of ‘extreme sports’, except that there has to be some element of danger. The top five are probably mountain biking, skateboarding, in-line skating, paintballing and alpine skiing. But it’s not that everyone practises one of these five. There are so many sports that qualify as ‘extreme’. And new ones come into existence almost every year, with new followers flocking to them.

**Host:** New sports? Can you give us some examples of ‘new’ sports?

**Alex:** Well, you have a list of relatively new sports, like wingsuit flying, cave diving, powerbocking.

**Host:** Powerbocking?

**Alex:** Yes, it’s where you strap a pair of spring-loaded stilts to your legs and jump like a kangaroo.

**Host:** OK, if that’s what gets your kicks.

**Alex:** But there are other, more ‘mainstream’ extreme sports, such as freerunning, paragliding or even BASE [base] jumping – where you jump off a cliff or tall building with a parachute in hand.

**Host:** Yikes! That’s mainstream?

**Alex:** Well... it’s becoming more common. Most extreme sports combine elements of various sports. For example you can skydive with a snowboard, also known as ‘skyboarding’. Or you can surf with a kite, which is also known as ‘kitesurfing’.

**Host:** Kitesurfing. It’s funny you should mention that. That’s all I see at the beach these days. Why has this become so popular?

**Alex:** Well, kitesurfing is a good example of an extreme sport that has become popular because technology has made it possible. If you think about the materials involved, it’s a magical mix of inflatable, synthetic fabrics, nylon ropes, trapeze-style harnesses and carbon-fibre boards. And of course, you have to strap a waterproof camera to yourself to film this whole adventure. None of this was possible thirty years ago.

**Host:** And people can afford all of this gear, including the camera?

**Alex:** In fact, one and a half million people worldwide collectively spend about two hundred million pounds per year on kitesurfing gear. And I don’t know how many people buy these wearable cameras, but I hear that sales are through the roof.

**Host:** That sounds like big business.

**Alex:** You could even call it an ‘industry’; the extreme sports industry.

**Host:** And that’s why there’s a degree in Extreme Sports Management?

**Alex:** Exactly. Our degree gives students a view of all aspects of the industry. We look at event organisation, safety regulations, marketing strategies and leadership skills, just to name a few.

**Host:** Isn’t it rather ironic that you’re offering a degree in something that is usually considered so... unconventional? I mean, I usually think of extreme sports as something almost illegal.

**Alex:** Yes, I see what you mean. But these days, people want their thrills, and yet... they want to walk away with all their limbs intact. They want danger. But they need safety equipment. They want to go off the beaten path. But they’d like to have ‘followers’. All of these paradoxes are part of human nature, I guess. And it’s good to have someone ‘managing’ these experiences so as to prevent people from hurting themselves.