Rob
Welcome to 6 Minute English, the programme where we explore an interesting topic and bring you some useful items vocabulary. I'm Rob.

Neil
And I'm Neil.

Rob
Now Neil, I know you're a keen swimmer.

Neil
I am. I try to get to the pool once a week and do a few lengths, yes.

Rob
That's good to hear because swimming is one of the best sports for keeping fit. It's an aerobic exercise – aerobic means a very active type of exercise that makes your heart and lungs stronger. The opposite of this is anaerobic – and for my question today Neil, I wonder if you know which of these activities is an example of anaerobic exercise?
   a) weightlifting
   b) kickboxing
   c) dancing

Neil
I don't have a clue but I'll pick my favourite sport – a) weightlifting.

Rob
Is that really your favourite sport?! Anyway, we'll find out the answer at the end of the programme.

Neil
So what about you Rob – do you visit the swimming pool very often?
Rob
Only to use the cafe! I don't like anything aquatic – I mean connected to water. I just don't like getting wet - and swimming up and down a pool is just boring!

Neil
Well there are alternatives to plain swimming. There's synchronised swimming…

Rob
Synchronised – that's moving together at the same time or speed as someone else. Like dancing in water I suppose? Hmm, I'm not a good dancer either.

Neil
How about the new craze of 'mermaiding' which is making a splash at the moment – in other words becoming very popular. The idea originated in America but is now popular in the UK and Europe.

Rob
OK. Tell me more!

Neil
Let's hear from an expert – Emma Longden, who's founder of Fin2Fit – which runs classes, teaching the skills of swimming safely like a mermaid…

Emma Longden, founder, Fin2Fit
Mermaiding is putting a monofin on your feet. Putting a beautiful tail on and getting in the water and swimming like a mermaid.

Rob
OK, so I would need to wear a monofin – the prefix 'mono' means 'only one or single' – so a single fin –that's like a mermaid's tail - then I just get in the water and swim like a mermaid – I'm not so sure about that Neil – I don't really know how mermaids swim!

Neil
There's more to it than that Rob. It's actually good for your fitness as Emma can explain…

Emma Longden, founder, Fin2Fit
It gives children's confidence in water a boost, it improves their water strength, it gives you an entire body workout. It works your cardiovascular system, it works your legs, your core – it improves the children's swimming technique, flexibility, balance, co-ordination – you get the reward, you get the social aspect – and alongside all of that, they're learning vital life skills along the way.

Neil
So there are many benefits to mermaiding Rob. Improving confidence, strength, technique and it's good for your cardiovascular system – **cardiovascular** relates to your heart and blood vessels.

**Rob**

I like the sound of the **social** aspect – and by that Emma means being with other people and having fun. It's an activity that's sociable. And it teaches life skills – useful skills that help you deal with everyday challenges. Well that's great for kids – and that's the problem.

**Neil**

What's that?

**Rob**

Mermaiding is for kids – so I can't get involved – even if I wanted to… can I?

**Neil**

You can Rob. According to Emma, it's growing in popularity with adults too – any excuse to live out your fantasies hey!

**Emma Longden, founder, Fin2Fit**

There are so many adults that actually kind of want to live out their childhood dreams that they wanted to be a mermaid when they were children and they didn't get the opportunity and now it's here and now it's available and… So yes, we do a lot of adult classes as well.

**Neil**

There you go Rob – living out your childhood dreams – that doing things you wanted to do when you were a child. Like being a mermaid!

**Rob**

Sorry Neil, that wasn't a dream for me – although I did dream of swimming like a shark once! Anyway, mermaiding is a good form of aerobic exercise – but earlier I asked you what an example of anaerobic exercise is. Is it…

a) weightlifting  
b) kickboxing  
c) dancing

**Neil**

I said weightlifting. Was I right?

**Rob**

You were Neil, well done. Any exercise that consists of short exertion, high-intensity movement is an anaerobic exercise – such as weight lifting, sprinting and jumping. I won't go into scientific detail – but aerobics exercise is done over a longer period of time and strengthens the heart and lungs, thereby improving the body's utilisation of oxygen.
Neil
Thanks for that Rob. Now I think we should sprint through our recap of some of the words we've talked about today – starting with 'aerobic', which you just explained. "Mermaiding is a good aerobic workout."

Rob
Assuming you don't mind dressing up! Next we had 'aquatic' which refers to something connected with water. "Synchronised swimming is an example of an aquatic sport."

Neil
Ah, you slipped in another of our words there – 'synchronised' – which means 'moving together at the same time or speed as someone or something else'. "We synchronised our watches so that we all arrived at the same time."

Rob
Good idea – you're always late Neil. Then we mentioned 'mono' which means 'one' or 'single' and is used as a prefix on words such as 'monochrome' – one colour – or 'monorail' – a train running on a single track.

Neil
Then we heard the word 'cardiovascular' - a word that relates to the effect on your heart and lungs. "Experts say those who quit smoking could also quickly reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease."

Rob
Finally, we also mentioned 'social' – this adjective relates to activities that you do with other people and are usually fun. "Now I live in London, I have a great social life."

Neil
Well you never invite me out Rob! Anyway, that's it for this edition of 6 Minute English. Before you rush off to fulfil your dream of being a mermaid, don't forget to visit our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube pages, and of course our website!

Rob
Yes and that's at bbclearingenglish.com. Bye for now.

Neil
Goodbye.