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1. Daily News Articleについて
2. ディスカッションに関するアドバイス

Meet the older Australians riding waves and rowing rivers to stay fit and connected

印刷用画面を開く

Posted October 14, 2025

Category: Lifestyle/Entertainment

Listening



Tutor Preparations

Useful Links:

Facebook Group of the Gold Coast Granny Grommets:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1682271405690454/about>About Fitzroy River: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Fitzroy-River-Queensland>

Related Articles:

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-08-03/ageing-well-in-regional-qld-with-fitness-and-fun/105458084>

Warm-up (2-3 minutes)

Ask the warm-up questions below.

Have you ever tried surfing?

Do you like water sports and activities?

Unlocking Word Meanings (3-4 minutes)

Have the student read the words, definitions, and example sentences below. Confirm their understanding. Use the additional info only when necessary.

1. **paddle** / 'pæd l / [PAD-l] (v.) – to move a boat by pushing it with a long stick with a flat end
Example: The children enjoyed **paddling** in the shallow river.
Additional info: As a noun, **paddle** refers to the instrument used for the activity of **paddling**.
2. **vital** / 'vaɪ t l / [VAHYT-l] (adj.) – very important or necessary
Example: Learning English is **vital** for students who want to study or work in the U.S.
Additional info: A related adjective is **essential**.
3. **regardless of (something)** / rɪ 'gɑrd lɪs əv / [ri-GAHRD-lis uhv] (idiom) – without being influenced or affected by something
Example: People enjoyed the festival **regardless of** the long lines and crowded streets.
Additional info: A related word is **despite**.
4. **collective** / kə 'leɪ tɪv / [kuh-LEK-tiv] (adj.) – done or shared by a group of people, not just one person
Example: The students made a **collective** decision to clean the school garden.
Additional info: An antonym of this word is **separate**.
5. **endeavor** / ɛn 'deɪ əv / [en-DEV-er] (n.) – an attempt to do something, especially something difficult or important
Example: Starting a new business is a challenging **endeavor**, so she planned everything carefully before opening her shop.
Additional info: A related word is **effort**.

Article (5-7 minutes)

Have the student read the article aloud. For the comprehension questions, you may ask them:

- (a) As the student reads the article. Tell them ahead of time when to pause.
- (b) After the student finishes reading the whole article.

From surfing the waves to **paddling** along the powerful Fitzroy River, people in Queensland, Australia are discovering creative ways to keep active as they grow older.

While physical activity is key to maintaining good health, experts highlight that the social connections formed by exercising with friends are equally **vital** for overall well-being.

Every week, the “Gold Coast Granny Grommets” meet to surf waves and age gracefully. “We’ve got a group of about five of us that come every week without fail and get in the cold water **regardless of** the temperature,” says surfer Caroline Holliday.

Q: What do experts highlight for overall well-being?

A: Experts highlight that the social connections formed by exercising with friends are equally vital for overall well-being.

Surfing in their sixties, they understand the benefit of being active.

“I think you have to make it a priority every day. So, for me, I train every day in some way or other, and this is just a really good, fun way of doing it,” explains surfer Lesley Vick.

“Having that connection is very, very important. It probably outweighs the physical, though that’s really important too,” says Holliday.

Beyond the clear physical advantages, researchers suggest that working out in a group can play a crucial role in encouraging older adults to maintain long-term



Self Studyとは

Search タイトルから検索

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S

M

L

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[September 2025 \(26\)](#)[August 2025 \(31\)](#)[July 2025 \(31\)](#)[June 2025 \(30\)](#)[May 2025 \(31\)](#)[April 2025 \(30\)](#)[March 2025 \(31\)](#)[February 2025 \(28\)](#)[January 2025 \(31\)](#)[December 2024 \(31\)](#)[November 2024 \(30\)](#)[October 2024 \(31\)](#)[September 2024 \(30\)](#)[August 2024 \(31\)](#)[July 2024 \(31\)](#)[June 2024 \(30\)](#)[May 2024 \(31\)](#)[April 2024 \(30\)](#)[March 2024 \(31\)](#)[February 2024 \(29\)](#)[January 2024 \(31\)](#)[December 2023 \(31\)](#)[November 2023 \(30\)](#)[October 2023 \(31\)](#)[September 2023 \(30\)](#)[August 2023 \(31\)](#)[July 2023 \(31\)](#)[June 2023 \(30\)](#)[May 2023 \(31\)](#)[April 2023 \(30\)](#)[March 2023 \(31\)](#)[February 2023 \(28\)](#)[January 2023 \(31\)](#)[December 2022 \(31\)](#)[November 2022 \(30\)](#)[October 2022 \(31\)](#)[September 2022 \(30\)](#)[August 2022 \(31\)](#)[July 2022 \(31\)](#)[June 2022 \(30\)](#)[May 2022 \(31\)](#)[April 2022 \(30\)](#)[March 2022 \(31\)](#)[February 2022 \(28\)](#)[January 2022 \(32\)](#)[December 2021 \(31\)](#)[November 2021 \(30\)](#)[October 2021 \(31\)](#)[September 2021 \(30\)](#)[August 2021 \(31\)](#)[July 2021 \(31\)](#)[June 2021 \(30\)](#)[May 2021 \(31\)](#)[April 2021 \(30\)](#)[March 2021 \(31\)](#)[February 2021 \(28\)](#)

group can play a crucial role in encouraging older adults to maintain long-term activity and can also help prevent feelings of loneliness.

Q: According to researchers, what can working out in a group do for older adults?

A: Working out in a group can play a crucial role in encouraging older adults to maintain long-term activity and can also help prevent feelings of loneliness.

“The social support and being with others increases our mood and our mental health as well. So, it ticks two boxes if you can get out, get active and get active with others,” says Dr. Stephanie Alley of Central Queensland University.

These friends from Rockhampton have taken up rowing to stay fit in their sixties. “It’s very hard to injure yourself, and as you get older, that’s really important,” says rower Stuart Kininmonth.

But for the Fitzroy Fossils, it’s not just about staying physically fit. “The beauty of rowing in a boat, it’s a team sport, so you get the opportunity to be with people, you’re doing something that’s a **collective endeavor**,” concludes rower Simon Irwin.

This article was provided by The Associated Press.

Q: According to rower Simon Irwin, what is the beauty of rowing in a boat?

A: “It’s a team sport, so you get the opportunity to be with people, you’re doing something that’s a collective endeavor,” concludes rower Simon Irwin.

Summary (optional)

Ask the question below to check if the student can summarize the article.

What was the article about?

Viewpoint Discussion (9-13 minutes)

Have a discussion with the student using the questions below. Be sure to ask follow-up questions to make the student produce more. You do NOT have to ask all the questions.

Discussion A

- Surfing and rowing in their sixties, these groups show a different image of aging. How does this change the usual idea of what older people should do? What activities do you hope to keep doing as you grow older? Discuss.
- Researchers said group activities help older adults stay active for the long term. What other benefits, besides health, can older people get from group activities? How do you think participating in collective endeavors helps older adults develop long-term habits? Discuss.

Discussion B

- One surfer said, “You have to make it (surfing training) a priority, every day.” What daily habits are most important for you (ex. exercise, studying)? How do you decide which tasks to do first each day? Discuss.
- What do you think makes a habit long-term: discipline or enjoyment? Why? Discuss.

Category: [Lifestyle/Entertainment](#)

- [January 2021 \(31\)](#)
- [December 2020 \(31\)](#)
- [November 2020 \(30\)](#)
- [October 2020 \(31\)](#)
- [September 2020 \(30\)](#)
- [August 2020 \(31\)](#)
- [July 2020 \(31\)](#)
- [June 2020 \(30\)](#)
- [May 2020 \(31\)](#)
- [April 2020 \(30\)](#)
- [March 2020 \(31\)](#)
- [February 2020 \(29\)](#)
- [January 2020 \(31\)](#)
- [December 2019 \(31\)](#)
- [November 2019 \(30\)](#)
- [October 2019 \(31\)](#)
- [September 2019 \(30\)](#)
- [August 2019 \(31\)](#)
- [July 2019 \(31\)](#)
- [June 2019 \(30\)](#)
- [May 2019 \(31\)](#)
- [April 2019 \(30\)](#)
- [March 2019 \(31\)](#)
- [February 2019 \(28\)](#)
- [January 2019 \(31\)](#)
- [December 2018 \(31\)](#)
- [November 2018 \(30\)](#)
- [October 2018 \(31\)](#)
- [September 2018 \(30\)](#)
- [August 2018 \(31\)](#)
- [July 2018 \(31\)](#)
- [June 2018 \(30\)](#)
- [May 2018 \(31\)](#)
- [April 2018 \(30\)](#)
- [March 2018 \(31\)](#)
- [February 2018 \(28\)](#)
- [January 2018 \(31\)](#)
- [December 2017 \(31\)](#)
- [November 2017 \(30\)](#)
- [October 2017 \(31\)](#)
- [September 2017 \(30\)](#)
- [August 2017 \(31\)](#)
- [July 2017 \(31\)](#)
- [June 2017 \(30\)](#)
- [May 2017 \(31\)](#)
- [April 2017 \(30\)](#)
- [March 2017 \(15\)](#)

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料金プラン
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よくあるご質問
法人のお客様へ
教育機関関係のお客様へ

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