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**Level 4 – 9th February 2026**

## **Hero boy swims for four hours to save his family**

**FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:**

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260209-hero-swimmer-4.html>

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**Please try Levels 5 and 6. They are (a little) harder.**

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# THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260209-hero-swimmer-4.html>

A boy is a hero after an epic swim to save his family. Austin Appelbee, 13, and his family were kayaking and paddleboarding in Australia. They were in shallow water, but the wind pushed them four kilometres away from land. It was getting dark. Austin tried to kayak to shore, but the waves flipped his boat over. He knew he was in trouble. He said he had no choice but to swim to land to raise the alarm. He swam through shark-frequented waters.

Austin got to the beach and phoned for help. Coastguards found and rescued the boy's mother and two younger sisters. The boy said: "I hit the bottom of the beach and I just collapsed....I had to sprint two kilometres to get to the phone." Rescuers called him "superhuman". One rescuer could not praise him highly enough. He said Austin's determination and courage saved the lives of his family. Austin's mother called the experience a "nightmare".

Sources: <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/teen-13-makes-harrowing-swim-through-shark-frequented-waters-to-save-family-swept-out-to-sea/YS5HBJ2Y2BFP3G44WGQ7Z67BPM/>  
<https://www.nbcnews.com/world/australia/australia-perth-family-stranded-sea-teenager-swims-rcna257203>  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cly3ezj3rg3o>

# PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260209-hero-swimmer-4.html>

## PARAGRAPH ONE:

- |                             |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. A boy is a hero after an | a. to raise the alarm   |
| 2. They were in shallow     | b. four kilometres away |
| 3. the wind pushed them     | c. water                |
| 4. It was getting           | d. frequented waters    |
| 5. the waves flipped        | e. dark                 |
| 6. He said he had no        | f. his boat over        |
| 7. swim to land             | g. choice               |
| 8. He swam through shark-   | h. epic swim            |

## PARAGRAPH TWO:

- |  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
| 1. Austin got to the beach and           | a. courage          |
| 2. Coastguards found and rescued         | b. of the beach     |
| 3. I hit the bottom                      | c. a "nightmare"    |
| 4. Rescuers called him                   | d. of his family    |
| 5. One rescuer could not praise him      | e. phoned for help  |
| 6. Austin's determination and            | f. "superhuman"     |
| 7. saved the lives                       | g. the boy's mother |
| 8. Austin's mother called the experience | h. highly enough    |

# LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260209-hero-swimmer-4.html>

A boy is a hero after (1) \_\_\_\_\_ to save his family.

Austin Appelbee, 13, and his family were kayaking and paddleboarding in

Australia. They were (2) \_\_\_\_\_, but the wind

pushed them four kilometres away from land. It was getting dark. Austin

tried to kayak to shore, but the (3) \_\_\_\_\_ boat

over. He knew he (4) \_\_\_\_\_. He said he had

(5) \_\_\_\_\_ to swim to land to raise the alarm. He

swam through (6) \_\_\_\_\_.

Austin got to the beach and phoned for help.

(7) \_\_\_\_\_ rescued the boy's mother and two

younger sisters. The boy said: "I (8) \_\_\_\_\_ of the

beach and I just collapsed....I had (9) \_\_\_\_\_

kilometres to get to the phone." Rescuers

(10) \_\_\_\_\_. One rescuer could not

(11) \_\_\_\_\_ enough. He said Austin's determination

and (12) \_\_\_\_\_ lives of his family. Austin's mother

called the experience a "nightmare".

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260209-hero-swimmer-4.html>

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# HEROES SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260209-hero-swimmer-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about heroes in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.  
When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_
- d) \_\_\_\_\_
- e) \_\_\_\_\_
- f) \_\_\_\_\_

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## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_
- d) \_\_\_\_\_
- e) \_\_\_\_\_
- f) \_\_\_\_\_

## WRITING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2602/260209-hero-swimmer-4.html>

Write about **heroes** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner's paper.

[illegible]