

7 Extreme Situations

Reading

- A** Read the breaking news about a real-life story. Who are the people in the story and where were they? Where were they going? What do you think happened next?

BREAKING NEWS

Thursday, October 12, 1972: Flight 571 carrying Uruguay's championship rugby team took off from Montevideo, Uruguay, heading to Santiago, Chile. On the plane were 45 people: the crew, the Uruguayan players, and their friends and relatives. Soon after take off, the plane had to stop in Mendoza, Argentina, because of bad weather.

Friday, October 13, 2.18 pm: Flight 571 took off again, heading for Santiago.

Friday, October 13, 3.20 pm: About an hour into the flight, the pilots began the descent into Santiago, not realising the plane was still close to the high peaks of the Andes Mountains ...

- B** You are going to read an article about what happened to the passengers on Flight 571. Quickly scan the article to check your predictions about what happened next.

Survival in the Andes

On Friday, October 13, 1972, a plane that had been flying from Uruguay to Chile with 45 people on board crashed into a mountain in the Andes. How some of the passengers managed to live is one of the great survival stories.

Twenty-nine people died in the crash and in the weeks following it. On the mountain, it was freezing cold and the survivors stayed inside the crashed plane to stay warm. They had very little food and were in very great danger while they waited for a rescue team. After 11 days on the mountain, they found a small radio on the plane and they heard the news that the rescue teams had stopped searching for them. All hope was gone. They were alone and terrified.

Days became weeks. Two months after the crash, after they had waited for summer to arrive, three of the passengers, Roberto Canessa, Nando Parrado and Antonio Vizintin, left to search for help. Each man wore three pairs of socks, with a plastic bag around each foot to keep the water out, boots, four pairs of trousers and four jumpers. Many of the clothes were from the people who had died in the crash. They also took with them a large sleeping bag that they had made. Only they could save the others now.

How did these brave young men cope with the journey? None of them had climbed mountains before and it was hard. They climbed very dangerous, icy peaks, trying to reach the top of the mountain. Some days later, exhausted and cold, they reached it. They had imagined this moment for days. On the other side of the mountain, they wanted to see a valley below that would take them out of the mountains. But instead of a valley, they saw more of the same snowy peaks. Lots of them. They weren't near the end of the mountains; they were in the middle of them. What could they do?

Word Focus

- peak:** the top of a mountain
exhausted: very tired
valley: an area of low land between mountains, often with a river through it
ordeal: a very painful or difficult thing

But there was still hope. Parrado saw two low peaks about 65 kilometres away that didn't have snow on them. If they could get there, they would be out of the high Andes. But to reach the peaks, they would need to walk for more days and they didn't have enough food. But Parrado had a solution: Vizintin could return to the plane and he and Canessa would take his food. They agreed on the plan, and Canessa and Parrado continued their journey.

As they walked, the area around them slowly began to change. The men discovered a small river; the sun was warmer. After a few days of walking, the snow had disappeared completely and flowers were everywhere. 'This is the valley,' Canessa said excitedly. 'This is the way out!'

Soon, they saw a few cans on the ground and some farm animal

C Read the *Exam Close-up*. Then read the *Exam Task* and underline the key words.

Exam Task

Read the text and questions below. For each question, choose the correct letter a, b, c or d.

- 1 What is the writer doing in this text?
 - a giving advice on how to survive
 - b explaining incredible past events
 - c showing that air travel is dangerous
 - d writing an imaginative story
- 2 Why were the three men disappointed?
 - a The view from the mountain was not very good.
 - b They didn't know how to return to the plane.
 - c They realised they had more problems.
 - d They had not brought enough warm clothes.
- 3 Vizintin returned to the crash site because
 - a he had lost hope.
 - b he didn't agree with Parrado's solution.
 - c he didn't want to walk any further.
 - d there wasn't enough food for three people.
- 4 Parrado and Canessa knew they were close to safety because
 - a they saw things that belonged to people.
 - b they discovered a river.
 - c they had been walking for ten days.
 - d there were flowers in the snow.

Exam Close-up

Reading for general understanding

- It's a good idea to get a general understanding of the message of the text before you complete the exam task.
- Read the text carefully from beginning to end without worrying about new vocabulary. This will give you a good idea of what the text is about.
- Go back to each paragraph and make notes about the main idea in each one.
- Then take some time to think about all the ideas in the text before starting the exam task.

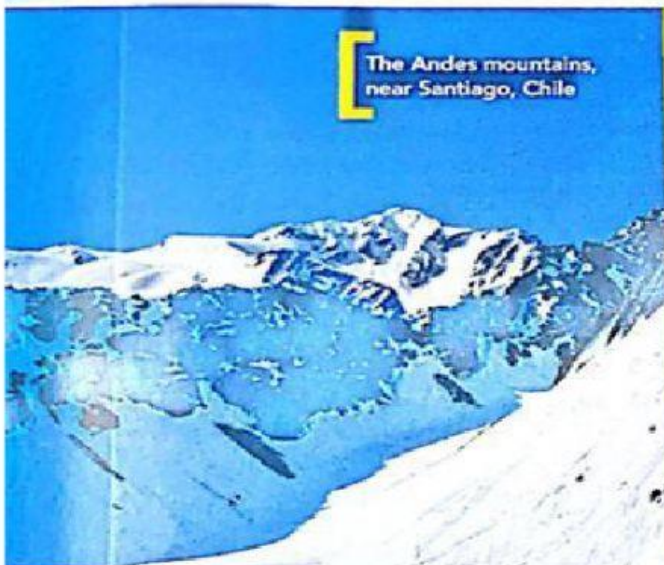
- 5 Which best describes what happened to the people on Flight 571?
 - a The survivors of the crash waited for many weeks in the plane for someone to find and rescue them.
 - b Tragically, 29 people died when the plane they were travelling in crashed into a mountain in the Andes.
 - c In a terrible situation, and with no hope at all, the survivors found a way to save themselves.
 - d To stay warm in the freezing cold, they wore the clothes of the people who had died in the crash.

D Find the meaning of the words below in the text. Then complete the sentences below.

cope with search survive save crash reach

- 1 You will _____ the car if you don't know how to drive it properly.
- 2 It is possible to _____ in the jungle if you know how to find food.
- 3 There were many problems and Harry didn't _____ them very well.
- 4 They were in the middle of the desert so nobody could _____ them.
- 5 After we _____ the river, we'll rest before we cross to the other side.
- 6 Rescue teams will continue to _____ for the missing mountain climbers.

E Write some more sentences in your notebook, using the words in D.



The Andes mountains, near Santiago, Chile

in a field. They knew there must be people somewhere nearby. On December 21st, after ten days, the exhausted men reached the town of Los Maitenes in Chile, and a rescue team went to save the other passengers high up in the Andes.

What had happened to them? Fortunately, they had all survived as they waited for the others to get help. The memories of the crash in the Andes would be with them forever, but their ordeal was over. They had made it out – alive.

- Do you think you would cope with the situation if you got lost in a foreign country? Why? / Why not?
- What one thing could you not survive without?

Ideas Focus

