

## Multiple matching

1 Read the article about the explorer Ranulph Fiennes quickly. In the article, is he mainly

- ~A giving advice to inexperienced explorers?
- ~B talking about the nature of exploration?
- ~C promoting adventure travel to young people?

2 For questions 1–10, answer by choosing from the sections of the article (A–D). Some of the choices may be required more than once.

**In which section are the following mentioned?**

an aspect of Fiennes's character that may have been unfairly highlighted

1

a negative effect of the growing interest in adventure travel

2

Fiennes's suggestion that people find increasingly unusual ways to achieve recognition

3

a misconception regarding the knowledge previous explorers had

4

Fiennes's fascination with a field in which he is fairly inexperienced

5

Fiennes's opinion that someone who is reasonably fit could reach the South Pole

6

the belief that explorers have too much respect for their own field

7

Fiennes's primary motivation for being an explorer

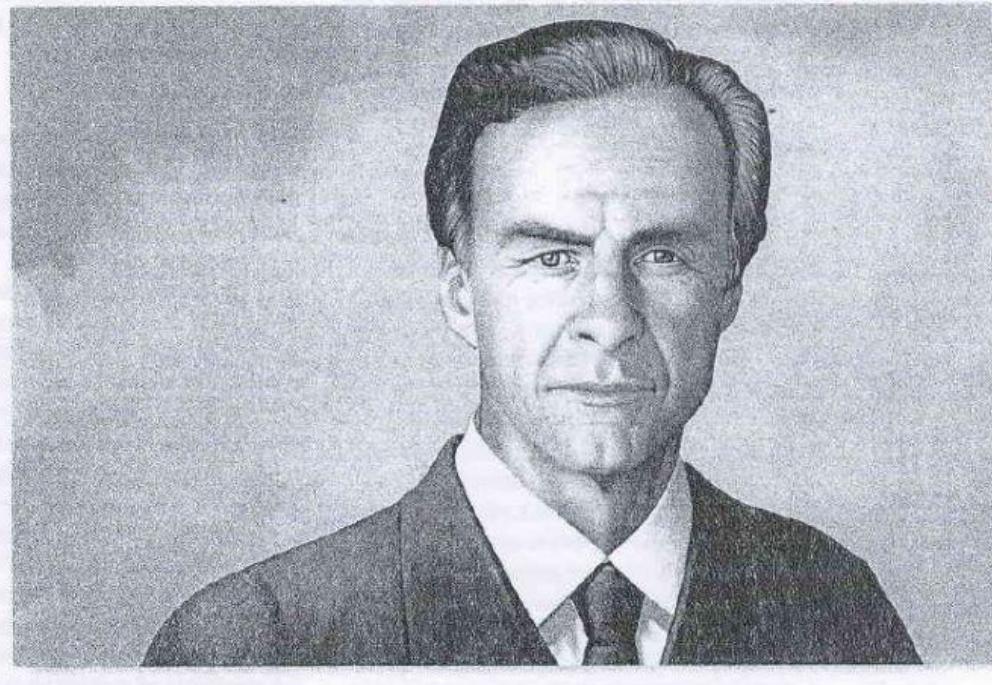
8

the importance given by explorers to achieving something before anyone else

9

a reason Fiennes gives for exploration becoming more appealing to amateurs

10



# Is this your idea of fun?

*Sir Ranulph Fiennes is the world's greatest living explorer. But now it seems an endless stream of people are conquering the South Pole or clambering up Everest. Mark MacKenzie asks him, is the exploring game becoming too easy?*

## A

In the field of human exploration, Sir Ranulph Fiennes's personal achievements are remarkable and his numerous expeditions to the North and South Poles have turned him into an iconic figure, the explorer's explorer. Now there are many amateurs that would follow in his footsteps and adventure travel is one of the fastest growing sectors of the travel market. This year, record numbers are expected at the base camp of Everest, in the hope of reaching the summit of the world's tallest peak. So, is the exploring game getting too easy? 'Anyone who plans carefully could get to the South Pole if they're in relatively good condition and go at the right time of year,' says Fiennes. 'I would say the same of Mount Everest. If the weather's good and you take a reasonable guide, you should be able to get up even if you've never climbed before. However, there are still plenty of expeditions the majority of the public would not be able to do. Crossing the whole continent of Antarctica unsupported, for example, your troubles only really start at the South Pole. But the urge to go to far-flung regions is innate to man,' Fiennes continues, 'and I think provided there is no ecological damage, this is fine. On Everest, though, there has been a dramatic impact in terms of litter.'

## B

But with specialist companies willing to deposit increasing numbers of tourists in ever more remote locations, is exploring still a true test of character? 'The challenge is what you make of it,' says Fiennes. 'In the wrong weather, you can have the most horrendous time on reasonably easy routes.' Also lying behind the increasing numbers of extreme adventurers, says Fiennes, is the improved technology used for polar equipment. 'It's all a lot lighter now, less bulky. If you're inexperienced, that makes these journeys a lot more appealing.' Patrick Woodhead, whose young team reached the South Pole in 75 days, thinks the explorer community has a tendency to be overly reverential towards their discipline and claims his South Pole trek was a thoroughly enjoyable experience. However, in Fiennes' biography of the original Antarctic explorer, Captain Robert Falcon Scott, he implies strongly that

there are those among modern explorers who remain ignorant of the debt they owe to Scott's pioneering spirit. 'People today think we knew back then that Antarctica was a continent – we didn't. On his first expedition to Antarctica in 1902, Scott made an 800-mile journey when the furthest expedition previously had been 14 miles.'

## C

What is it that has driven explorers to the extremes of the Earth? 'Explorers have always had a thousand different motives,' Fiennes acknowledges. 'If I'm asked myself, I am quite clear. It's my profession and how I make an income. There are people who aren't comfortable with that. I'm supposed to say "Because it's there to be conquered." I think some people still need this image of nobility.' Such frankness has contributed to Fiennes's reputation for occasional haughtiness. On an expedition in 1971, he made the mistake of taking along a television crew. 'It meant good publicity for future expeditions,' he says, 'but they deliberately set out with the aim of showing me up as a dictator.'

## D

Nevertheless, Fiennes has built his reputation on the only sort of accomplishment that matters among his peers – being first. 'When Sir Edmund Hillary first scaled Everest, he used every aid at his disposal. The next "first" then has to be the person to do it without oxygen, then the first solo ascent and so on.' So are there any true 'firsts' left? 'In part, it's the attitude of the individual,' he says. 'If something has been done, they will find their own firsts. Eventually, expeditions end up relying on gimmicks; for example, going to the South Pole on a motorbike, or on a camel and so on.' In 1992, Fiennes completed his first archaeological expedition to find the lost city of Ubar in the deserts of Oman. He admits he found the detective work intriguing, albeit a challenge for a relative amateur, and believes the possibility of making similar discoveries may increasingly occupy his time in the future. While most men his age are thinking about retirement, his appetite for adventure appears undiminished.