

7 What a view!

Before you read

1. Which mountain is the highest mountain in the world?
2. How high do you think it is?
3. Do you know who the first people to reach the top of the mountain were?

Reading

- 1 'We look up. For weeks, for months, that is all we have done. Look up. And there it is – the top of Everest. Only it is different now: so near, so close...It is no longer just a dream.'
- 2 In 1953 Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay were the first people to reach the top of Mount Everest. Tenzing Norgay is describing here how he felt when they were 300 metres from the top of the mountain. It was 6.30 in the morning. Five hours later, after a slow, hard climb through the snow and ice, the two men reached the highest place in the world. The view was incredible. All around them the men could see the Himalayan Mountains. They had to look down to see the white tops of some of the highest mountains in the world.
- 3 Many people dream about going to the top of Mount Everest. Climbing Mount Everest, though, is very dangerous. Even in the warmest month, July, the average temperature at the top of the mountain is about -19°C . Very strong winds and storms can start suddenly. And avalanches of snow and ice often fall down the mountain, burying everything in their path.
- 4 Around 200 people have died on the mountain, but every year people continue to come from all over the world to climb it. Some want to see the view that Norgay and Hillary saw. Most, though, just want to climb the highest mountain on Earth.

General understanding

Circle T for true or F for false for each of the following statements.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Mount Everest is the highest mountain in the world. | T / F |
| 2. No one has ever reached the top of Mount Everest. | T / F |
| 3. Mount Everest is in the Himalayan Mountains. | T / F |
| 4. Many people have died trying to climb Mount Everest. | T / F |

In detail

Write short answers to the following questions.

1. In what year did the first people reach the top of Mount Everest?

2. What were their names? _____
3. What did they see from the top? _____
4. What is the average temperature at the top of Mount Everest in July?

5. Why do so many people climb Mount Everest? _____
6. How many people have died on the mountain? _____

In focus

Below is a list of things that climbers consider when planning to climb Mount Everest. Mark the positive things with a + sign, and the negative things with a – sign.

1. ___ The view from the top is incredible.
2. ___ Around 200 people have died trying to climb Mount Everest.
3. ___ Even in the warmest month, the average temperature at the top of the mountain is about -19°C .
4. ___ Avalanches of snow and ice often fall down the mountain.
5. ___ It is the highest mountain on Earth.
6. ___ It's a slow, hard climb through snow and ice.
7. ___ Climbing Mount Everest is very dangerous.

Vocabulary

A. Complete each sentence with the correct word.

view temperature average avalanche felt

1. Our hotel room had a wonderful _____ of the city.
2. The _____ age of US soldiers who fought in Vietnam was nineteen.
3. Perth is one of the hottest cities in Australia. In summer the _____ can reach 40 degrees.
4. I _____ very sad when my cat died.
5. An _____ is a huge amount of ice and snow that falls down a mountain.

B. Choose the correct word or phrase with the same meaning as the blue words in each sentence.

very bad weather with strong winds and lots of snow or rain
wonderful or very surprising without warning carry on about

1. We couldn't go skiing at the weekend because of the storm.
2. I was driving my car when a little boy suddenly ran across the road. I stopped just in time!
3. There are around twenty species of piranha in the Amazon River.
4. If you continue to practise the piano, you'll be really good at it.
5. The most incredible animals I've ever seen were the pink dolphins outside Hong Kong harbour.

In other words

A. What is the main purpose of the passage? Circle 1, 2 or 3.

1. To describe what it is like to climb Mount Everest.
2. To explain why people want to climb Mount Everest.
3. To explain why it is dangerous to climb Mount Everest.

B. Match each heading to the correct paragraph in the passage.

1. Paragraph _____ The first trip to the top.
2. Paragraph _____ A dangerous dream.
3. Paragraph _____ The words of a hero.