

# Going Up a Mountain

By ReadWorks



Mount Everest is the tallest mountain in the world. It is located in the country of Nepal. It is 8,848 meters tall. This means it is just over five-and-a-half miles in height. Until 1953, nobody had successfully climbed Mount Everest, though many had tried.

Mount Everest has steep slopes. Many climbers have slipped and fallen to their deaths. The mountain is very windy. Parts of it are covered with snow. Many mountaineers would get caught in snowstorms and be unable to climb.

The mountain is rocky. Sometimes, during snowstorms, rocks will tumble down the slopes of the mountain. Any climbers trying to go up the mountain might be risking their lives. There is also very little oxygen atop Mount Everest. This is because the oxygen in the air reduces as we go higher. This means that it is difficult for climbers to breathe. The climbers have to take oxygen in cylinders to breathe which means they have to carry extra weight on their backs. This slows them down.

In 1953, a New Zealand-based climber, Edmund Hillary, and a Nepalese climber, Tenzing Norgay, climbed Mount Everest for the first time. They both took photographs on the peak. They then buried some sweets on the peak, as a gesture to celebrate their climb. But they could not stay for long, because it was windy and snowy. They soon came down.

Later, many people asked Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay which of them had reached the peak first. They both said it was a team effort; it didn't matter because they had gone together.

After Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, many other climbers went up the mountain. In 1975, Junko Tabei became the first woman to climb Mount Everest.

In 1980, Reinhold Messner became the first man to climb the mountain alone. Until then, climbers had always gone up the mountain in teams. The team members would help fix ropes, set up camps, and make food. But Reinhold Messner went alone to the top.

Reinhold Messner was a great climber. Back in 1978, he had climbed Everest without carrying any extra oxygen. He'd said that it was "man against the mountain."

In recent years, many have climbed Mount Everest. As of 2010, 3,142 people had climbed the mountain. Many climbers fly to the city of Kathmandu in Nepal. In Kathmandu, many see the Royal Palace. They buy Everest-themed T-shirts, books and CDs.

Once climbers are settled in Kathmandu, they meet local guides called Sherpas. The Sherpas are Nepali men who have grown up in the mountains. They are experts at climbing. They are also physically very strong. The Sherpas give climbers bags, ropes, tents, and other equipment. As of 2013, this equipment can cost almost \$8,000. The climbers buy oxygen cylinders which can cost \$3,000.

Once the climbers have all their luggage, they go to a location called Base Camp. From Base Camp, they climb up Mount Everest.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is the tallest mountain in the world?

- A Mont Blanc
- B Mount Everest
- C Kilimanjaro
- D Mount McKinley

2. What does the author describe in the beginning of the passage?

- A why people climb Mount Everest in teams
- B the two men who first climbed Mount Everest
- C who Sherpas are and what they do
- D the dangers of climbing Mount Everest

3. It is harder for people to breathe on Mount Everest than at sea level. What evidence from the passage supports this conclusion?

- A Mountaineers can get caught in snowstorms.
- B Mount Everest is windy, cold, and dangerous.
- C The amount of oxygen in the air drops as you go higher.
- D Rocks can tumble down the slopes of the mountain.

4. Read the following sentences: "Many climbers fly to the city of Kathmandu in Nepal. In Kathmandu, many see the Royal Palace. They buy Everest-themed T-shirts, books and CDs."

Which of the following conclusions is supported by this information?

- A Mount Everest helps drive tourism in Nepal.
- B Only climbers buy Everest-themed T-shirts.
- C Most people visit Kathmandu to see the Royal Palace.
- D Flying to Kathmandu is the only way to reach Everest.

5. What is this passage mostly about?

- A the dangers of mountain climbing
- B routes from Base Camp to the summit
- C the cost of climbing supplies
- D climbing Mount Everest

6. Read the following sentences: "There is also very little oxygen atop Mount Everest. This is because the oxygen in the air **reduces** as we go higher. This means that it is difficult for climbers to breathe."

What does "**reduces**" mean as used in this sentence?

- A becomes visible
- B becomes smaller
- C becomes challenging
- D becomes larger

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reinhold Messner, no one had successfully climbed Mount Everest alone.

- A In the end
- B Such as
- C Before
- D Instead

8. Who first successfully climbed Mount Everest?

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9. Name three dangers that climbers face when climbing Mount Everest.

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10. How might Sherpas help climbers deal with or prepare for the dangers of Mount Everest? Support your answer using details from the passage.

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## Teacher Guide &amp; Answers

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 660

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8. Who first successfully climbed Mount Everest?

**Suggested answer:** Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay first successfully climbed Mount Everest.

9. Name three dangers that climbers face when climbing Mount Everest.

**Suggested answer:** Students may give any three of the following:

- steep slopes
- wind
- snowstorms
- rocks tumbling down the slopes
- low oxygen / difficulty breathing

10. How might Sherpas help climbers deal with or prepare for the dangers of Mount Everest? Support your answer using details from the passage.

**Suggested answer:** Answers may vary and should be supported by the passage. Answers may include:

- Sherpas have grown up in the mountains and are experts at climbing, so they can help climbers find good routes to the summit.
- Sherpas are very strong, so they can help climbers on steep slopes.
- Sherpas know the weather conditions, so they can make sure climbers have the proper equipment, e.g. oxygen cylinders to deal with the difficulty breathing.