

The First Ascent of Mt. Everest **History Happened Here Series**

Subject Areas: Social Studies, World History

Synopsis: Archival film footage and dramatic reenactments capture Edmund Hillary's 1953 ascent to the summit of Mount Everest. Hillary and his guide, Tenzing Norgay, became the first men to reach the top of the world and return. Reenacts their final summit ascent, including the famous "Hillary Step" rock climb.

Learning Objectives:

- Objective 1)** Students will be able to describe Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay's ascent to the top of Mount Everest in 1953
- Objective 2)** Students will be able to describe conditions on Mount Everest
- Objective 3)** Students will be able to recognize the hard work and determination necessary to achieve goals

Vocabulary:

Himalayas, Mountaineers, summit, Sherpa, expedition, harrowing, triumph, endurance, monarch, knighthood, Nepal, grandeur, adventurers, goal

Pre-Viewing Questions and Activities:

- 1) Locate Mt. Everest on a map.
- 2) Have a class discussion about achievements and goals. Why do we set goals for ourselves? How do you achieve goals? Ask students to share some of their goals with the class.

Post-Viewing Questions and Discussion:

- 1) How high is Mount Everest? How does its height compare to other mountains in the world? Why have so many people attempted to climb the mountain? Why were most unsuccessful?
- 2) Describe the weather conditions at Mount Everest. Why is this an especially difficult climb? What challenges must mountaineers overcome on Mount Everest? Why was the climb risky?
- 3) Who accompanied Edmund Hillary? Why did he need a guide? What were Tenzing Norgay's qualifications?
- 4) Why do you think Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay were successful? What do you think kept them going on their climb? How do you think they felt when they reached the top of Mount Everest?
- 5) How were Hillary and Norgay honored for their accomplishment? Why did their accomplishment inspire the world?

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Additional Activities:

- 1) Imagine that you are planning a trip to Mount Everest. Research the height of the mountain, routes to the summit, and items you will need. Chart the weather conditions at Mount Everest for an extended period of time. When is the best time of year to climb Mount Everest? What other dangers are there besides weather?
- 2) Write newspaper articles reporting Edmund Hillary's ascent to the top of Mount Everest and the accession of Queen Elizabeth II.
- 3) Learn about the equipment used to climb Mount Everest in 1953, when Edmund Hillary climbed the mountain, and the equipment used today. Has technology improved the safety or success of Mount Everest expeditions? How?
- 4) For many, climbing Mount Everest is the goal of a lifetime. Have a class discussion about goals. What is a goal? Why do we set goals? Give examples of long- and short-term goals. How do people achieve their goals? Have you ever set a goal and achieved it? How did you feel? Why are some goals difficult to attain? What steps can you take to achieve your goals? Have students write a personal goal at the top of a piece of paper. Underneath, have them write some practical actions they can take to achieve their goals.
- 5) Read one of the many books written about climbing Mr. Everest, or other Himalayan peaks such as Annapurna or K2, and report of what aspect of climbing it describes.

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