

*On May 29th, 1953, Tenzing Norgay, along with Sir Edmund Hillary, was one of the first two people to reach the summit of Mount Everest, the highest mountain on Earth. The following passage is taken from his autobiography.*

**WORDS TO KNOW**

As you read, look inside, around, and beyond these words to figure out what they mean.

- **pinnacle**
- **summit**

from

# TIGER *of the* SNOWS

## The Autobiography of Tenzing of Everest

by Tenzing Norgay

- 1 On top of the rock cliff we rested again. Certainly, after the climb up the gap we were both a bit breathless, but after some slow pulls at the oxygen I am feeling fine. I look up; the top is very close now; and my heart thumps with excitement and joy. Then we are on our way again. Climbing again . . . .

Tenzing Norgay, the Famous Sherpa Mountaineer

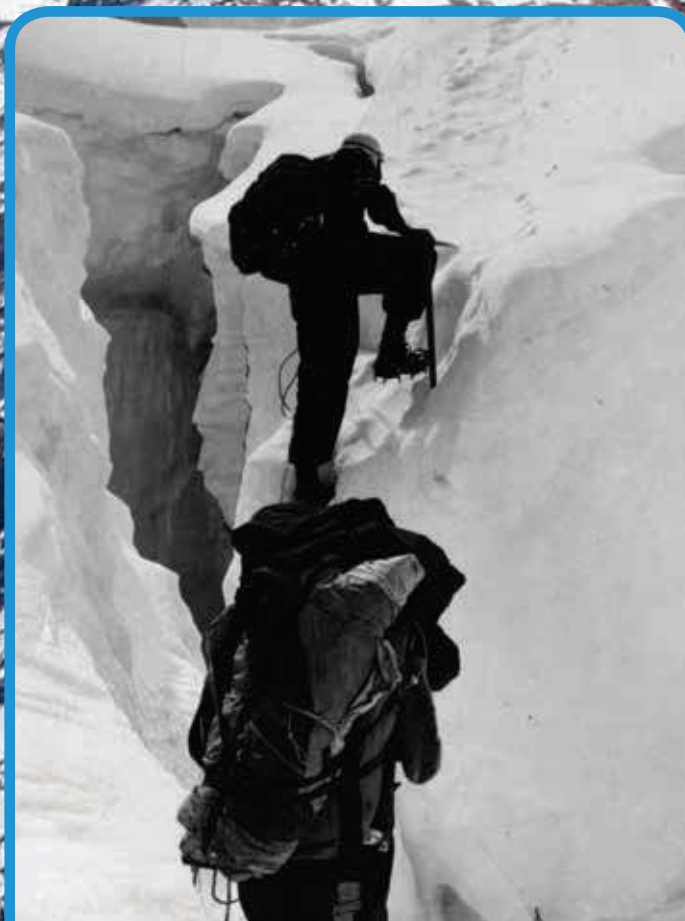


2 Then the rocks, too, are beneath us. We are back among the snowy humps. They are curving off to the right, and each time we pass one I wonder, “Is the next the last one? Is the next the last?” Finally we reach a place where we can see past the humps, and beyond them is the great open sky and brown plains. We are looking down the far side of the mountain upon Tibet. Ahead of us now is only one more hump—the last hump. It is not a pinnacle. The way to it is an easy snow slope, wide enough for two men to go side by side. About thirty feet away we stop for a minute and look up. Then we go on . . . .

3 A little below the summit Hillary and I stopped. We looked up. Then we went on. The rope that joined us was thirty feet long, but I held most of it in loops in my hand, so that there was only about six feet between us . . . .



Tenzing Norgay and Edmund Hillary  
Pose After Their Climb



The pair climb beyond a deep fissure on Mount Everest.



4 We stepped up. We were there. The dream had come true . . . .

5 What we did first was what all climbers do when they reach the top of their mountain. We shook hands. But this was not enough for Everest. I waved my arms in the air and then threw them around Hillary, and we thumped each other on the back until, even with the oxygen, we were almost breathless. Then we looked around. It was eleven-thirty in the morning, the sun was shining, and the sky was the deepest blue I have ever seen. Only a gentle breeze was blowing, coming from the direction of Tibet, and the plume of snow that always blows from Everest's summit was very small . . . .

6 It was such a sight as I had never seen before and would never see again: wild, wonderful, and terrible. But terror was not what I felt. I loved the mountains too well for that. I loved Everest too well. At that great moment for which I had waited all my life my mountain did not seem to me a lifeless thing of rock and ice, but warm and friendly and living. She was a mother hen, and the other mountains were chicks under her wings. I too, I felt, had only to spread my own wings to cover and shelter the brood that I loved.



Mount Everest straddles the border between Nepal and China.



**Think** Use what you learned from reading the autobiography to respond to the following questions.

**1** This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

**Part A**

How is the first paragraph different from the ones that come after it?

- A** It describes events that led Norgay and Hillary to climb Mount Everest. The other paragraphs tell about problems they overcame on their climb.
- B** It shows what a mountain climber has to do to stay alive on a dangerous climb. Later paragraphs tell what happened as they reached the top and why it happened.
- C** It helps readers understand a problem the climbers faced and how they solved it. Later paragraphs tell the order of the events as the men climbed to the top of the mountain.
- D** It compares what Tenzing Norgay felt as he reached the top of the mountain to what Hillary felt. Other paragraphs help readers understand why they made the climb.

**Part B**

Underline a detail in paragraph 1 that **best** supports the answer to Part A.

On top of the rock cliff we rested again. Certainly, after the climb up the gap we were both a bit breathless, but after some slow pulls at the oxygen I am feeling fine. I look up; the top is very close now; and my heart thumps with excitement and joy. Then we are on our way again. Climbing again . . . .

**2** What does the word plains mean as it is used in paragraph 2?

- A** grassy fields
- B** aircraft
- C** bodies of water
- D** Tenzing’s homeland

- 3** This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then answer Part B.

**Part A**

How does the author **mainly** organize the details in *Tiger of the Snows*?

- A** by stating the problems he faced and how he solved them
- B** by stating his point of view and comparing it to Hillary's
- C** by explaining the events in the order they occurred
- D** by explaining what happened and why it happened

**Part B**

Which **two** details from the text **best** support the answer to Part A?

- A** "I look up; the top is very close now; and my heart thumps with excitement and joy." (paragraph 1)
- B** "Finally we reach a place where we can see past the humps, and beyond them is the great open sky. . . ." (paragraph 2)
- C** "The way to it is an easy snow slope, wide enough for two men to go side by side." (paragraph 2)
- D** "We looked up. Then we went on." (paragraph 3)
- E** "The dream had come true . . ." (paragraph 4)
- F** "But this was not enough for Everest." (paragraph 5)

- 4** Put events from the autobiography in the order they happen by writing the numbers 1 to 4 on the lines before each sentence.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tenzing and Hillary shake hands at the top of the mountain.

\_\_\_\_\_ As Tenzing and Hillary climb above the rocks, Tenzing wonders if the next snowy hump will be the last one.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tenzing compares the mountain to a mother hen with chicks under her wings.

\_\_\_\_\_ After climbing up a gap, Tenzing and Hillary rest on a rock cliff and breathe in extra oxygen.