

# Total English

Intermediate

## On top of the world



### Reading

**1 Look at the photo and the title of the worksheet. Which mountain is it, do you think?**

**Who are the people in the photo?**

**2 Read the text quickly and check your answers.**

Sir Edmund Hillary, possibly the world's most famous mountaineer, died on 11 January this year, aged 88. Hillary is best known for his **ascent** of Mount Everest on 29 May 1953 with Sherpa Norgay Tenzing, when they became the first men to reach the top of the world's highest mountain.

Hillary was born in 1919 in New Zealand. He started skiing at a young age and learnt to love the mountains. He began climbing in the Southern Alps of New Zealand in 1940, and went on from there to the European Alps in 1950. He had to take a break, however, in the early 1940s during the Second World War, when he worked for the New Zealand Navy. His first experience in the Himalayas was in 1951, when his lifelong **fascination** with Nepal began. After his famous ascent in 1953, he continued climbing and went on other **expeditions**, for example to the South Pole in 1958.

His serious climbing **career** ended in 1961 because of illness, but his love of Nepal grew and he spent a lot of the rest of his life working on **community** projects in Nepal, building schools, hospitals, and so on.

Through Hillary's life people asked him which of the two climbers reached the **peak** of the mountain first, and he always said they did it together. It was only after the death of Tenzing in 1986 that Hillary admitted that he was in fact the first man on top of the world.

experience – something that happens to you

admitted – said it was true



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### 3 Read the text again. Are the sentences true or false?

- 1 Hillary was famous for many climbing achievements.
- 2 He started climbing before the Second World War.
- 3 He started climbing in the European Alps.
- 4 He developed a great interest in Nepal.
- 5 He worked on a lot of projects for mountaineers.
- 6 Hillary and Tenzing reached the top of Everest together.

### 4 Put the events from Hillary's life in the order in which they happened.

- a) Hillary climbed Mount Everest with Sherpa Tenzing. [ ]
- b) Hillary started climbing. [ ]
- c) He said that he was the first man at the top of Everest.[ ]
- d) He worked for the New Zealand Navy. [ ]
- e) He stopped climbing because of illness. [ ]
- f) Sherpa Tenzing died. [ ]

### Vocabulary

#### 5 Look at the **highlighted** nouns in the text and match them with these meanings.

- 1 people who live in the same area    2 a climb to the top    3 top    4 great interest    5 job, work  
6 journey for a purpose

#### Learn it!

*spend* + noun + *-ing* form

*He spent the rest of his life working on community projects.*

*We spent hours last night watching DVDs.*



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## Grammar

**6 Find the past of these verbs in the text, then complete the sentences with the past form.**

admit become begin grow learn spend

- 1 I \_\_\_\_\_ all yesterday evening watching TV.
- 2 The teacher \_\_\_\_\_ very angry when we all started talking in class.
- 3 The plants in the garden \_\_\_\_\_ a lot during the rainy spring.
- 4 We \_\_\_\_\_ a lot from that documentary film we watched.
- 5 I \_\_\_\_\_ my new English course last week.
- 6 The young boy \_\_\_\_\_ breaking the shop window.

## Speaking

**7 Think of a famous person from the past that you like or admire. Make a few notes about the person and his/her life, and then tell your partner about him/her. Use the past simple tense.**



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