

# High Adventure



**Question Book:**  
Year 3, pages 18-19

**Author / Source:**  
Sir Edmund Hillary

**Genre:**  
Non-fiction — memoir

## Cross-curricular links:

- Art (illustrating a text)
- Geography (tourism)
- Maths (ordering numbers)

## Introduction

On 29 May 1953, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay made history when they became the first people to reach the summit of Mount Everest. In this extract, Hillary describes how he fell in love with mountains when he went on his first skiing holiday at the age of sixteen. Before pupils read the extract, make sure they read the introduction so that they are aware of Hillary's subsequent career as one of the twentieth century's most famous mountaineers.

## Answers

1. E.g. Because he had never been very far from Auckland before, and he wanted to see the world.
2. E.g. He felt excited and happy because he was seeing snow for the first time — he says it was "a tremendous thrill".
3. "as hard as iron"
4. E.g. Because it makes the mountain sound magical, like in a fairy tale, and helps you imagine how beautiful it was.
5. E.g. Because he had been told that they were dangerous. OR Because he was scared of them.
6. Any appropriate answer. E.g. Yes, because this ski trip was the first time that he saw snow and mountains. It gave him a "fiery enthusiasm" for them, which probably made him want to be a mountaineer.

## Extra Activities

- With the whole class, discuss the conventions of autobiographies and memoirs, encouraging pupils to identify features of this text which show that it is an example of autobiographical writing.
- Get pupils to write a short autobiographical passage or memoir describing the first time they did a favourite activity.
- Focusing on lines 11-18, ask pupils to identify the techniques that Hillary uses to describe the mountains. With the whole class, discuss the way these techniques help to build up a vivid image of the scene.
- Ask pupils to suggest other ways to describe a snowy scene. Get them to write and illustrate their own short passage, using descriptive language to create a vivid image of a snowy scene.
- Using the information in the extract, their own imaginations and online research if possible, get pupils to create a tourist brochure that will persuade people to visit Ruapehu. They may want to include a description of the natural beauty of the volcano, and suggestions for activities that people could do during their visit.
- Give pupils an alphabetical list of the ten highest mountains in the world and their heights in metres. Challenge pupils to arrange the list into height order.

Annapurna I — 8091 m  
Cho Oyu — 8188 m  
Dhaulagiri I — 8167 m  
Everest — 8848 m  
K2 — 8611 m  
Kangchenjunga — 8586 m  
Lhotse — 8516 m  
Makalu — 8485 m  
Manaslu — 8163 m  
Nanga Parbat — 8126 m