

RESOURCE LIBRARY | ACTIVITY : 45 MINS

The History of Mountaineering and Allure of Conquering Everest

Students read about the history of mountaineering and create a mountaineering timeline. They investigate the likelihood of George Mallory summiting Mount Everest without the second step ladder that is often used today. After analyzing the evidence, students decide how they think Mallory's experience should be recorded within the timeline.

GRADES

6, 7, 8

SUBJECTS

English Language Arts, Social Studies, World History

CONTENTS

4 PDFs, 1 Link

OVERVIEW

Students read about the history of mountaineering and create a mountaineering timeline. They investigate the likelihood of George Mallory summiting Mount Everest without the second step ladder that is often used today. After analyzing the evidence, students decide how they think Mallory's experience should be recorded within the timeline.

For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/history-mountaineering-and-allure-conquering-everest/>

In collaboration with

DIRECTIONS

This activity is part of the *Mount Everest: What Goes Up Should Come Down* unit.

1. Students collaboratively read and create a timeline of major events in the history of mountaineering.

- Distribute one copy of the *History of Mountaineering Timeline* worksheet and a copy of the *Reaching for the Heavens: The History of Mountaineering* article to each student. In collaborative groups, have students plan how to best split up the reading and completion of the worksheet.
- After students have completed the reading and creation of their timeline, conduct a discussion on the impact of technology on mountaineering. Ask students: *How have technological advances and other changes made mountaineering better and worse over time?*
 - Possible responses include:
 1. New technologically advanced tools, like the 10-point crampon, made difficult climbs easier and safer.
 2. Climbers began regularly using bolts for added safety and climbing help, and even the bolts improved over time.
 3. Increased safety has increased the popularity of mountaineering and the number of amateur climbers who attempt climbing, putting themselves and others in danger.
 4. If the equipment endows someone ill-prepared to do the climb with a false sense of confidence, that climber would take on more risk than they might be capable of managing successfully.

2. Students update their *Mount Everest: KWL Chart*.

- In their copy of *Mount Everest: KWL Chart* started in the last activity, *Mountaineering as Exploration, Recreation, and Vocation*, have students complete the L (What I Learned) column to indicate the answers they've found to their questions they wrote in the W (Want to Learn) column.
- An example of an answer students might come up with to one of their questions is:

- What I Want to Know: What are some of the greatest challenges in climbing Everest?
- What I Learned: In order to summit Mt. Everest, a mountaineer ascending from the northern side must climb an overhanging cliff at about 28,000 feet known as the Second Step.

Tip

Step 1: Guide students towards considering the negative impact of better equipment and technology in mountaineering, if students are unable to develop their own list of cons.

Modification

Step 1: There are two versions of the History of Mountaineering Timeline student worksheet—one that is blank and one that is partially filled in. Provide the partially filled in version to students who may need more support in completing the timeline.

Informal Assessment

Review students' *History of Mountaineering Timeline* to determine accurate understanding of how mountaineering has changed over time and to get an overview of the class opinion regarding Mallory's possible summit of Everest. Correct any misunderstandings.

Extending the Learning

Debate Extension: Is the reward of summiting Mount Everest worth the possible risks? Use the *Replicating 1920s Gear* video to launch this debate topic.

ELA Extension: Have students write a poem from the perspective of Mount Everest or a mountaineer attempting to summit the mountain that addresses the risks and rewards, and that which inspires the climb. For students who may need additional scaffolding, use a formulaic poem template, such as the *I AM poem*.

Did Mallory Make It? Debate Extension: Using the resources from *Did Mallory Make It?* have students debate whether or not George Mallory ever summited Mount Everest. Have students watch the two video clips and cite evidence to support or refute whether Mallory ever summited Mount Everest.

OBJECTIVES

Subjects & Disciplines

- English Language Arts
 - **Social Studies**
 - World History

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Place major mountaineering events on a timeline to show changes over time.
- Acknowledge that the rewards and possible risks of mountaineering have changed over time similar to the way equipment and climbing methods have changed.

Teaching Approach

- Project-based learning

Teaching Methods

- Information organization
- Multimedia instruction
- Reading

Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- 21st Century Student Outcomes
 - Information, Media, and Technology Skills
 - Information, Communications, and Technology Literacy
 - Learning and Innovation Skills
 - Communication and Collaboration
 - Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking Skills

- Analyzing
- Evaluating
- Understanding

National Standards, Principles, and Practices

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERACY

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2:

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7:

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6-8.1:

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on Grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

THE COLLEGE, CAREER & CIVIC LIFE (C3) FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL STUDIES STATE STANDARDS

- D2.His.12.6-8:

Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.

- D2.His.14.6-8:

Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.

- D2.His.2.6-8:

Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.

- D2.His.3.6-8:

Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are seen as historically significant.

Preparation

What You'll Need

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

- Internet Access: Required
- Tech Setup: 1 computer per classroom, Monitor/screen, Projector, Speakers

PHYSICAL SPACE

- Classroom

GROUPING

- Heterogeneous grouping
- Large-group instruction

RESOURCES PROVIDED: HANDOUTS & WORKSHEETS

- [History of Mountaineering Timeline Blank](#)
- [History of Mountaineering Timeline](#)
- [History of Mountaineering Timeline Answer Key](#)
- [Mount Everest: KWL Chart](#)

RESOURCES PROVIDED: ARTICLES & PROFILES

- History Cooperative: Reaching for the Heavens: The History of Mountaineering

BACKGROUND & VOCABULARY

Background Information

Throughout history, people have been inspired to climb mountains for many reasons. As climbing technologies, athleticism, and mountaineering tourism have evolved, the number of people attempting daring climbs and summits, such as that of Mount Everest, has increased. There are debates about the ethics of amateur mountaineers climbing with excessive amounts of support, such as that of ladders, Sherpa, oxygen tanks, and other unnatural amenities. But the fact remains that the mountains have always called to people, and they are still calling loudly today. The question is: How will we answer that call—haphazardly, or safely and sustainably?

Prior Knowledge

Recommended Prior Activities

- [Analyzing the Distribution of Vegetation Zones and Mountain Gorillas in Virunga National Park](#)
- [Danger Versus Desire: The Inspirational Power of the Peaks](#)

Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
alpinist	<i>noun</i>	mountain climber specializing in high, difficult ascents.
altitude sickness	<i>noun</i>	illness caused by reduced oxygen levels at high elevations.
amateur	<i>adjective</i>	person who studies and works at an activity or interest without financial benefit or being formally trained in it.
Mount Everest	<i>noun</i>	highest spot on Earth, approximately 8,850 meters (29,035 feet). Mount Everest is part of the Himalaya and straddles the border of Nepal and China.
scale	<i>verb</i>	climb up or reach the top of a mountain or other high point.
technology	<i>noun</i>	the science of using tools and complex machines to make human life easier or more profitable.

For Further Exploration

Articles & Profiles

- [American Safe Climbing Association: Homepage](#)
- [Earlham College: Human Impacts on the Environment](#)
- [Earlham College: Current Technology in Mountaineering](#)



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