

Edmund Hillary


Mountaineer

Born:	20th July 1919
Full name:	Sir Edmund Percival Hillary
Career:	First climber to reach the summit of Mount Everest



Personal Life

Edmund Hillary was born in Auckland, New Zealand. At school he spent a lot of time reading books, dreaming of a life of adventure. A trip to Mt Ruapehu when he was 16 sparked his interest in climbing and Hillary began getting involved in climbing groups.

In February 1953, Hillary was invited to join an expedition to Mount Everest with the British. Only one group was allowed a year on Everest so this was a big deal. There were over 400 people involved in the expedition. With an expedition like this, they had to climb the mountain in stages, moving higher every few weeks. As they got higher, more and more people stayed behind. By the time they got to the final camp, there were only two teams left; one of those was Hillary and his partner Tensing Norgay. 

On 29th May, they became the first people in the world to make it to the top. They could only stay at the top for a few minutes due to how thin the air was, before turning back to tell everyone they had made it.

Interesting Facts

- Hillary was a beekeeper for a number of years.
- He was conscripted to the RNZAF in 1943.
- He was knighted after reaching the top of Everest.
- Hillary is on the New Zealand \$5 note.
- He spent a lot of his life helping the Sherpa people of Nepal with a trust he founded called 'The Himalayan Trust'.
- Hillary died at age 88 from heart failure.

Reading task

1) How many teams were left by the time they got to the final camp? Tick one.

three

four

two

2) On which date did they reach the top of Mount Everest?

3) True or false?

They only stayed at the top of Mount Everest for a short amount of time because the air was thick.

Look at the 'Interesting Facts' section to answer these questions:

4) Which interesting hobby did Hillary do in addition to climbing? Circle one.

bee keeping

cooking

skiing

5) Create your own retrieval question about the Interesting Facts.