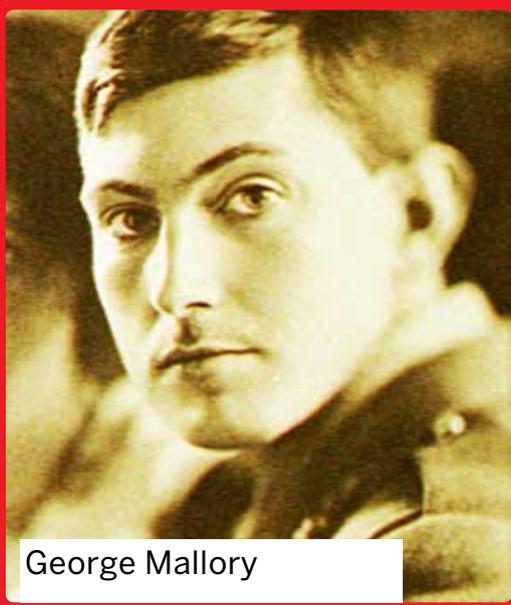


Everest

Conquering the world's highest peak

The modern trail

WAY TO M.T.
EVEREST B.C.



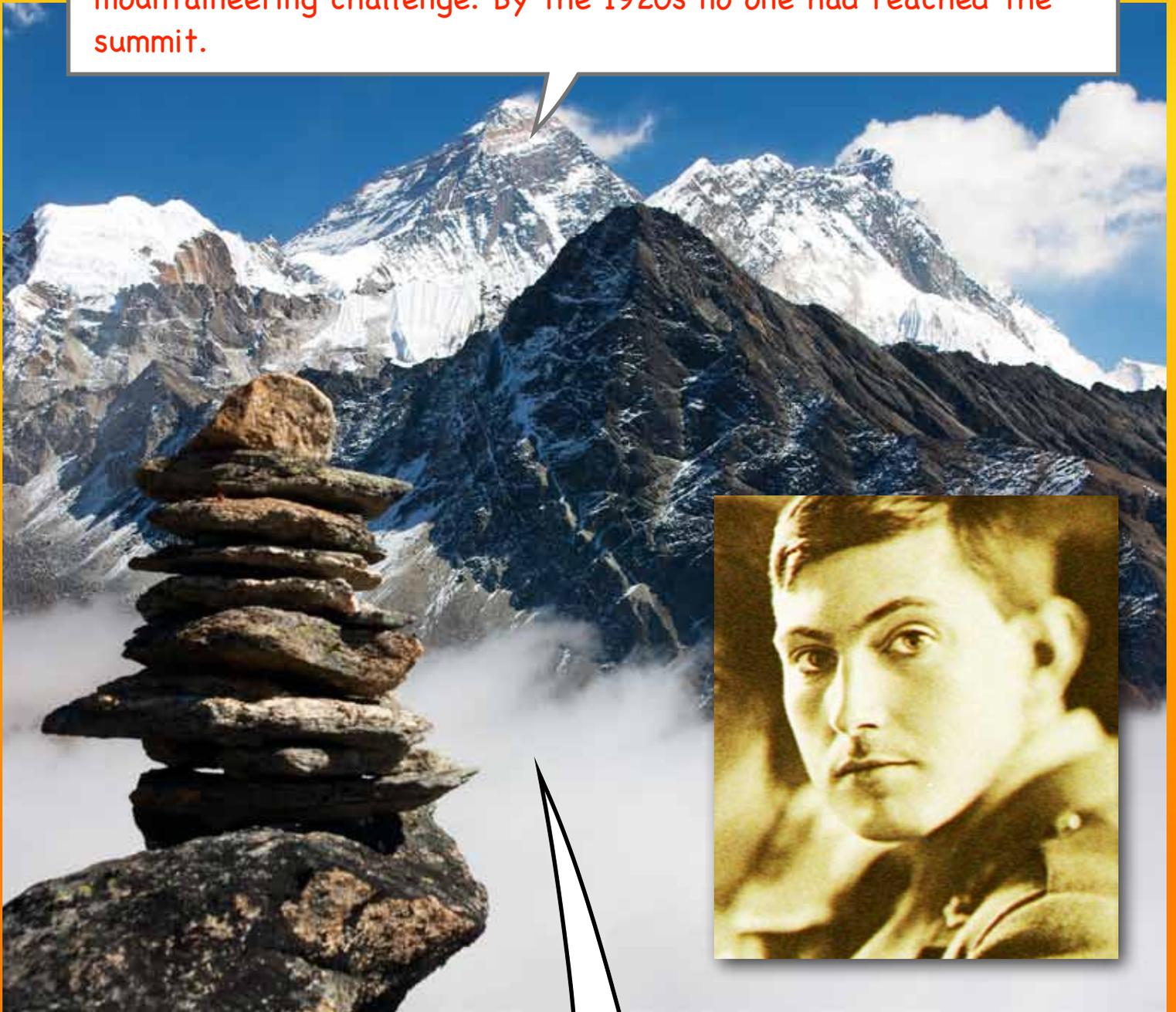
George Mallory

Base camp

Find out about the meaning of stories and articles

Everest

The highest mountain in the world is Mount Everest – some 8,848 metres above sea level. It has been seen as the last great mountaineering challenge. By the 1920s no one had reached the summit.



This was a challenge British mountaineer George Herbert Leigh Mallory could not resist. On June 8th 1924, he and his climbing partner Andrew Irvine were the pair who were chosen to make the last 'dash for the summit'.

So what was it like to try to climb Everest in 1924 and why did they want to do it? Mallory's reply to one reporter was "Because it's there". These have been called "the most famous three words in mountaineering".

At the time there was no special climbing kit as there is today. So the climbers wore clothes that they may also have walked about in at home. They were made of gabardine, wool, cotton and silk. But scientists have shown that many layers of these simple materials would have kept the climbers warm enough. It also had the advantage that it was lighter than modern mountaineering gear.

Here is a shortened account of the last sighting of Mallory and Irvine by one of the expedition, Noel Odell.

"At 12.50, there was a sudden clearing of the atmosphere, and the entire summit ridge and final peak of Everest were unveiled. My eyes became fixed on one tiny black spot silhouetted on a small snow-crest beneath a rock-step in the ridge; the black spot moved. Another black spot became apparent and moved up the snow to join the other on the crest. The first then approached the great rock-step and shortly emerged at the top; the second did likewise. Then the whole fascinating vision vanished, enveloped in cloud once more."

The climbers were never seen again.

Whether or not Mallory and Irvine reached the summit before they died is something that has fascinated many other climbers ever since. The first people who are definitely known to have reached the summit got there at 11.30am local time on the 29th May 1953. The two people who reached the summit were New Zealander Edmund Hillary and Nepalese Tenzing Norgay.



Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'silhouetted'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'silhouetted' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'silhouetted'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'silhouetted'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'silhouetted' means.



Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: unveiled	made clear

3

Summarising

(the gist of the story)

To summarise means to rewrite the story in a shorter version using as many of our key words from Task 2 as needed.

1 Write a heading for your summary.

2 Now write the main idea in one sentence.
e.g. "This story tells us..."

3 Now add some detail to the main idea by writing more sentences after it.

**Finally,
can you rewrite your
summary to make it better?**

1. Look out for errors such as using the same word too often – use alternatives.
2. Make sure you have summarised the author's purpose in your OWN words.
3. Make sure your summary is in a logical order.
4. Is your summary informative AND interesting to others?

There is nothing wrong with rewriting; even the best authors rewrite their work.

123
4

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

Going to Everest is now a popular tourist destination. Over the recent years, thousands of people have reached the summit.

In 1953 the team led by Hillary and Tensing reached the summit and took photographs. This was the first official record of anyone getting to the top.

No one had managed to reach the summit when Mallory and Irvine tried in 1924.

Mallory and Irvine died close to the summit.

Mallory and Irvine may have reached the summit. No one knows for sure. They had a camera, but no one has ever found it.

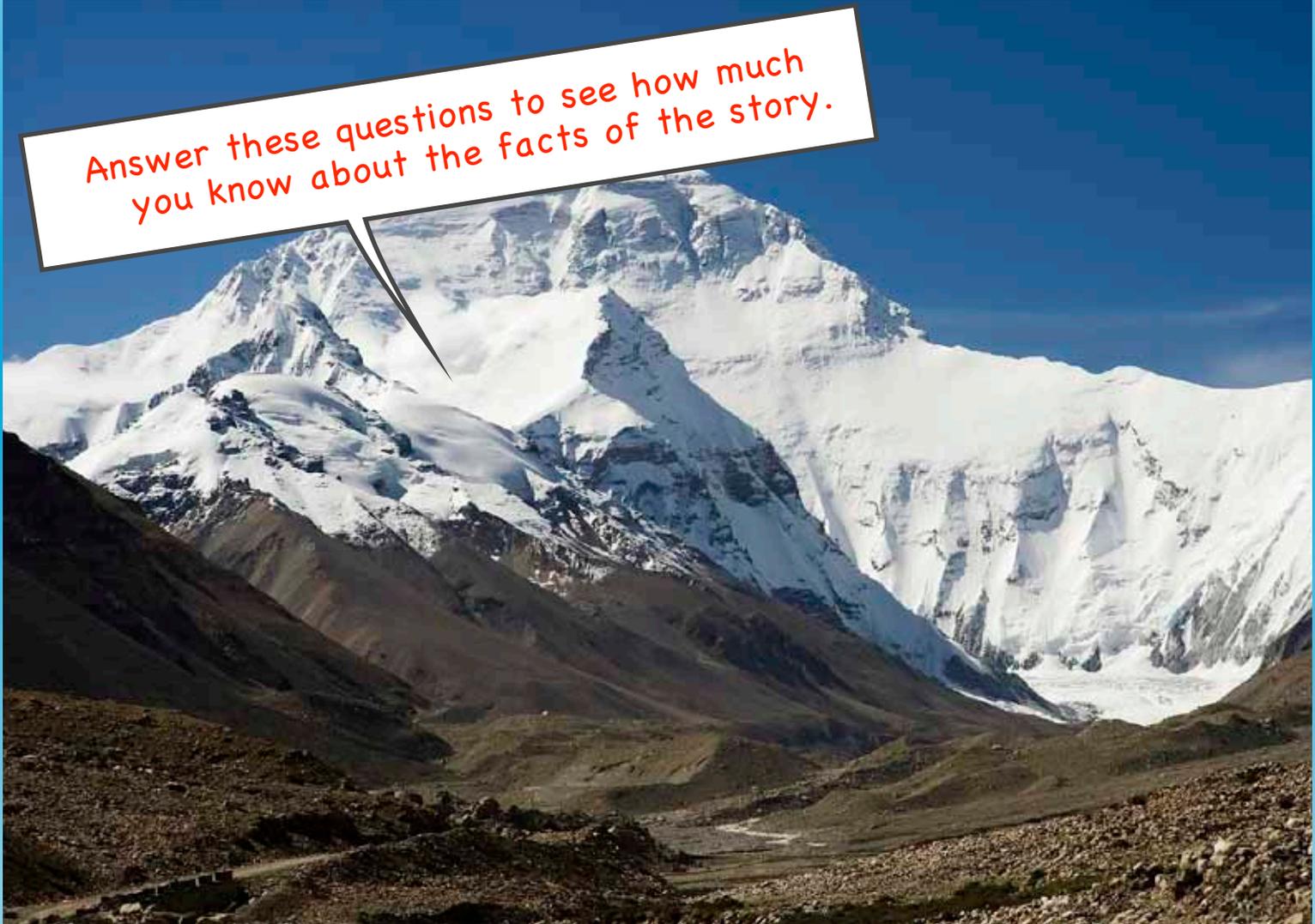
Mallory and Irvine wore lots of layers of normal clothing as they climbed.

Mount Everest was given its name in 1865. It was named after an English surveyor, Sir George Everest.



Get to the facts

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the facts of the story.



1 What is the world's highest mountain called?

2 How high is it?

3 Who climbed to near the summit in 1924?

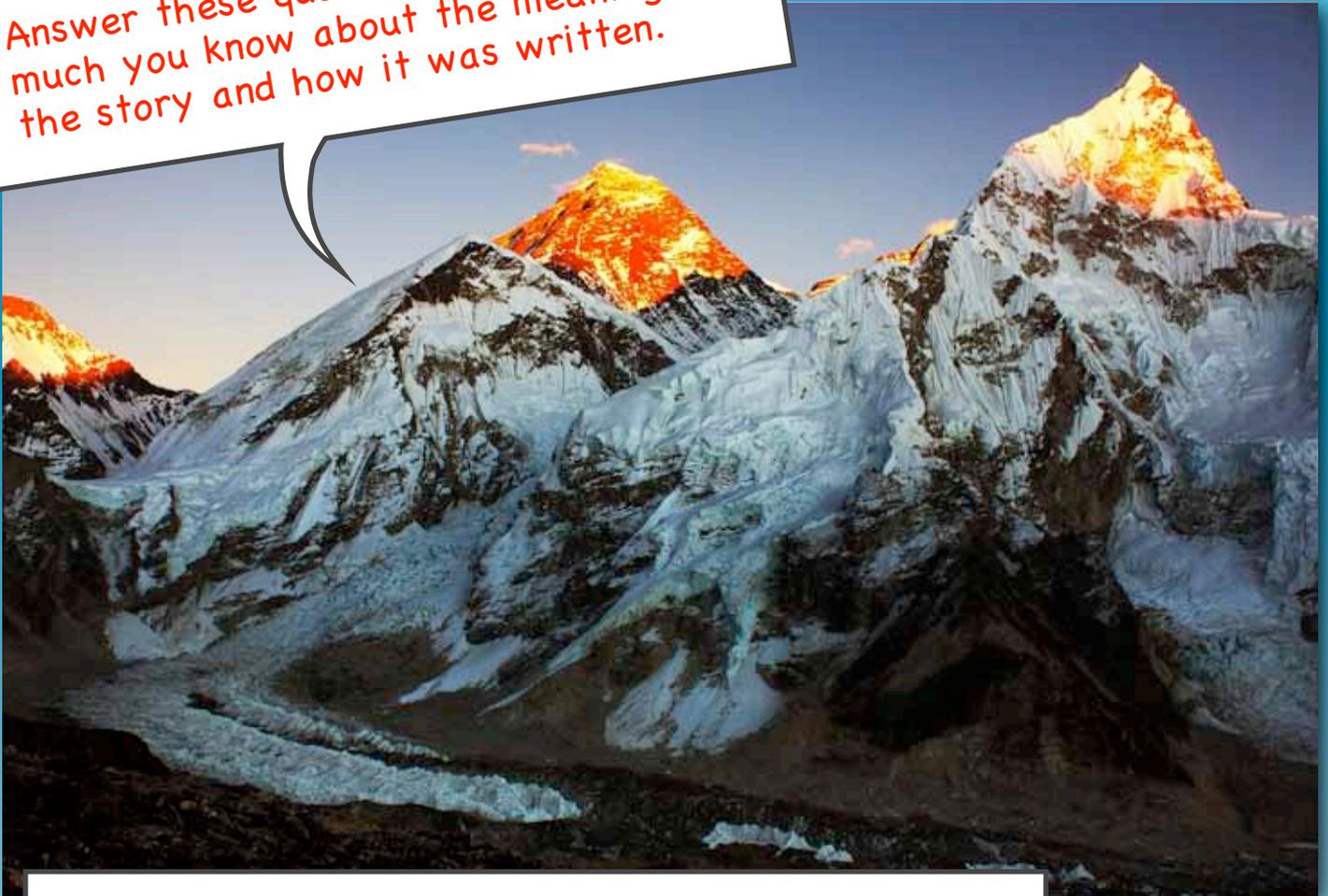
4 What happened to these climbers?

5 Who were the first we know of to reach the summit?



Whys and wherefores

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the meanings in the story and how it was written.



1 Why did Mallory try to climb to the top?

2 What did the last person to see Mallory and Irvine see?

3 Why do we not know whether Mallory reached the summit?

4 What was the advantage of the older-style clothing over modern gear?



Opinions matter

Answer these questions to give your views and to develop the story.

- 1 What were the three most famous words in mountaineering?
- 2 Would you agree with these three words? Give your reasons.
- 3 What is Odell trying to say when he uses the words 'black spot' for the climbers?
- 4 Can you draw any conclusions about how changeable the weather was?
- 5 Are you fascinated by the idea of reaching the summit of Mount Everest, or some other similar thing? Why is this?





Talking it through

It often helps if a group of people get together and discuss a problem.

Base camp.



Discussion topic: Preparing for the summit

Suppose you were at the base camp on Everest and this was your tent. It is very high up - 5364 metres. Suddenly one of your party gets taken ill with a common illness - altitude sickness. They report headache, being very tired, stomach ache and dizziness. What would you do?



Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.



At the ice fall

You are high up in the Himalayas, trying to reach the summit of one of the peaks. Suddenly you become aware of a giant footprint in the snow. Could it be the Yeti, or Abominable Snowman? You look round and... Now continue the story.

Conquering Everest

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