

## 1.2 Mountains on your mind

### + Section in brief

This section looks at how people react to extreme environments. It highlights that our attitude to mountains – the way we look at them and how we feel about them – has changed over time. It uses an extract from a poem written by Wordsworth in 1815 and an extract from *Touching the Void* by Joe Simpson to consider how extreme environments are represented in literature.

In the 'explore' activities, students:

- analyse, interpret, and react to a photo, an extract from a poem, and an extract from a book;
- use the mind movie technique;
- discuss questions with a partner.

### Key ideas

- Extreme environments – in this case, mountains – can be beautiful and awe-inspiring.
- Extreme environments can also be dangerous and threatening.
- The way we react to or think about extreme environments has changed – we used to think they were best avoided, but now more and more people find them exciting and want to explore them.

### Key vocabulary

+ extreme environment

### Skills practised

Geographical skills: Interpreting a photo.

PLTS: Creative thinking; using a mind movie.

Literacy skills: Interpreting a poem; interpreting an extract from a book, developing and writing a story.

### Section outcomes

By the end of this section, most students should be able to:

- define or explain the terms given in 'Key vocabulary' above;
- appreciate that extreme environments – in this case, mountains – can be beautiful, awe-inspiring, and exciting – but also dangerous;
- understand that the way we see or think about extreme environments has changed, from dangerous and best avoided to exciting and somewhere to explore – but still dangerous.

### Ideas for a starter

- 1 Use 'explore' question 1 as a starter.
- 2 Ask students to name some mountains – either mountain ranges or individual mountains. Ask what they know about the mountains named. How do they know that? Ask what they feel about the mountains – do they want to go there, or not? Why?
- 3 Find out if any of your students have been in high mountains – if so, ask them to briefly tell the class where, what it was like, and how they felt.

### Ideas for plenaries

- 1 Use 'explore' question 5 as a plenary.
- 2 Ask students to identify two key things they have learned today – you are looking for them to identify the second and third points in 'Section outcomes' above.
- 3 Ask the class if anyone has read more or all of *Touching the Void*, or seen the film. If someone has, ask him/her to say a little about the book or film. If no one has, ask if anyone would like to read it or watch it now they've had a taste of what it's about. Why? Why not?

### Further class and homework activity

Ask students to find other examples of how mountains have been represented in movies, books, newspapers, songs, poems, or paintings.

### explore answers

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| <p><b>1 a</b> Responses will vary – students might feel excited by the scale of the landscape, or intrigued by the lack of people and apparent remoteness; they might be unmoved, and have no feelings.</p> <p><b>b</b> Students might come up with some of the following: big, high, snowy, cold, cloudy, threatening, bleak, scary, forbidding, steep, dark.</p> | <p><b>2 a</b> Clear, bright, effluence, distant, smooth, shines, uprisen.</p> <p><b>b</b> The poet is inspired by the mountain, is in awe of the mountain.</p> <p><b>3</b> n/a</p> <p><b>4</b> n/a</p> <p><b>5</b> Discussion activity.</p> |
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