

# On Top of the World

## 1. Quick Reading

Look at the pictures on page 21.  
What is the story about?

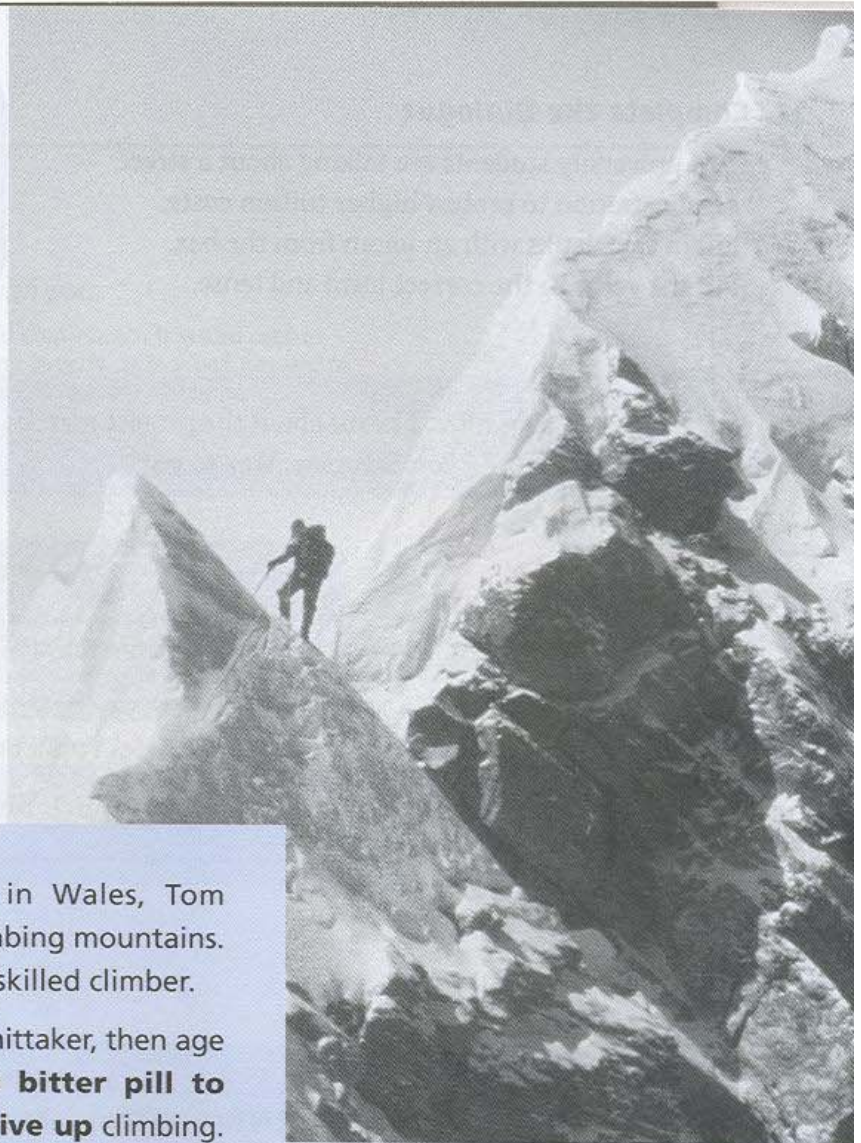
Now read quickly to get the main idea.

**KATMANDU, NEPAL** <sup>1</sup>As a boy in Wales, Tom Whittaker **had his heart set on** climbing mountains. He moved to the U.S. and became a skilled climber.

<sup>2</sup>In 1979, a drunk driver hit his car. Whittaker, then age 30, lost his right foot. This was **a bitter pill to swallow**. <sup>3</sup>However, he refused to **give up** climbing. Instead, he decided to **break new ground** as a disabled person. He **set his sights on** Mount Everest, the tallest mountain in the world. It's also the most dangerous; one in six climbers dies there.

<sup>4</sup>**Year in and year out** for more than ten years, Whittaker trained hard for his dream. <sup>5</sup>With the help of doctors and engineers, he designed a strong artificial foot to climb the terrible mountain. <sup>6</sup>In 1989, Whittaker **made a first attempt to** climb, but bad weather **forced him back**. In 1995, he made a second attempt. This time, illness forced him back.

<sup>7</sup>Finally, in 1998, Whittaker reached the roof of the world. "I arrived just as the sun **came up**," he said. He **was on top of the world!** <sup>8</sup>Whittaker **made history** as the first disabled person to climb Mount Everest.



*Climbing Mount Everest.*

## New idioms and expressions

<b>be on top of the world</b> .....	be very happy
<b>have one's heart set on something</b> .....	want something very much
<b>a bitter pill to swallow</b> .....	a difficult thing to accept
<b>give up (doing) something*</b> .....	stop or quit (doing) something
<b>break new ground</b> .....	do something that has not been done before
<b>set one's sights on (doing) something</b> .....	choose (to do) something as a goal
<b>year in and year out</b> .....	continuously for many years
<b>make an attempt (to do something)</b> .....	try (to do something)
<b>force someone back*</b> .....	make someone go back
<b>come up*</b> .....	rise (referring to the sun, moon, etc.)
<b>make history</b> .....	do something that will be remembered in history books

\*phrasal verb (see Lexicon and Appendix D)

### 2. Listen

Cover the story and look only at these pictures. Listen to the story two or three times.



### 3. Read the Story

Now read the story carefully. Pay special attention to the idioms so that you're ready for Exercise 4.

### 4. Listen and Complete

Close your book. Listen to the story again. When the tape or your teacher pauses, try to complete the idiom.

### 5. Match

Complete the idioms using the words in the box. Then write the number of the matching definition.

of the world	set on	attempt	ground
out	history	to swallow	

___ a.	make an _____	1. be very happy
___ b.	be on top _____	2. want very much
___ c.	break new _____	3. do something no one has done before
___ d.	have one's heart _____	4. try
___ e.	a bitter pill _____	5. continuously for many years
___ f.	year in and year _____	6. do something that will be remembered
___ g.	make _____	7. a difficult thing to accept

### 6. Tell the Story

Look only at the pictures and the New Idioms box on page 21. Tell the story using as many idioms as you can.

- First, work with the whole class to retell the story.
- Then tell the story to a partner or small group.

## 7. Answer the Questions

### About the story.....

- As a boy, what did Whittaker have his heart set on?
- How did he feel when he had the accident?
- After the accident, what did Whittaker set his sights on?
- What did he do year in and year out?
- What happened when he made a first attempt at Everest? What happened the second time?
- Why did Whittaker decide to climb such a difficult mountain?
- When did he arrive on the roof of the world? How did he feel?
- Why has he made history?
- What do you think of Whittaker?

### About you.....

- Who do you admire who has broken new ground or made history?
- What are you setting your sights on for the future?
- Would you like to make history? If so, for what?

## 8. Take a Dictation

Listen to the tape or your teacher and write the dictation in your notebook.

## 9. Complete the Idioms



- a. Jorge made an \_\_\_\_\_ to ice skate, but after falling so much, he decided to give it \_\_\_\_\_.

- b. Hyunwoo has her sights \_\_\_\_\_ becoming a doctor. She has studied year in and \_\_\_\_\_ for ten years.



- c. Einstein \_\_\_\_\_ history when he broke new \_\_\_\_\_ in physics.

- d. Françoise had to give \_\_\_\_\_ skiing when she broke her leg. It was a bitter \_\_\_\_\_.



## 10. Look at Grammar

**make an attempt**

**make an attempt at** something

**make an attempt at doing** something

**make an attempt to do** something

*It's hard for Lydia to learn Japanese, but she's making an attempt.*

*Lydia is making an attempt at Japanese.*

*Lydia is making an attempt at learning Japanese.*

*Lydia is making an attempt to learn Japanese.*

**break new ground**

**break new ground in** something

**break new ground by doing** something

**break new ground when...**

*Picasso broke new ground.*

*Picasso broke new ground in the art of painting.*

*He broke new ground by painting in a new style.*

*He broke new ground when he started painting in a Cubist style.*

**have one's heart set on** something

**have one's heart set on doing** something

*June had her heart set on a trip to Greece.*

*She had her heart set on going to Greece.*

**set one's sights on** something

**set one's sights on doing** something

*She is setting her sights on a medical degree.*

*She is setting her sights on becoming a doctor.*

Complete the sentences with help from the grammar box above. Make sure they are true for you.

- I admire \_\_\_\_\_ because he/she broke new ground \_\_\_\_\_.
- It's difficult, but I am making an attempt to \_\_\_\_\_.
- I made my first attempt at \_\_\_\_\_ in (date, place) \_\_\_\_\_.
- I have my heart set \_\_\_\_\_ before the end of the year.
- I have set my sights \_\_\_\_\_, so I must \_\_\_\_\_.

## 11. Write a Dialogue

Work with a partner. Write a dialogue using at least four idioms from the unit. Act it out for the class.

## 12. Complete the Dialogue

- a. Two friends, Tonya and Miguel, are talking about Tonya's restaurant business. Fill in the blanks with idioms from the box. Put the verbs in the correct form and tense.

- break new ground (v)
- year in and year out
- on top of the world
- make an attempt (v)
- have one's heart set on (v)
- give up (v)



Hi, Tonya. It's Miguel. I got your message. How are you?

Not exactly

(1) \_\_\_\_\_



What's the matter?

Bad news. My restaurant is losing money. Business is bad. I might have to close it.



(2) \_\_\_\_\_ the restaurant?  
You can't do that!

Well, I (3) \_\_\_\_\_ making it a success, as you know. But what can I do? I saved my money (4) \_\_\_\_\_ to start the place. Now the money's almost gone! I'm **broke**\*!



Well, you sure  
(5) \_\_\_\_\_ with your fabulous cooking.

Thanks, but...



Listen, what about advertising? The problem is no one knows about your place. (6) \_\_\_\_\_ to better inform people.

OK. One last try. Will you help me design an ad?



\*be broke: have no money (informal)

- b. Work with a partner. Role-play the dialogue together.