



## B Sport – going above and beyond → WB, pp. 7–8

### BEFORE YOU READ

#### 1 Think-pair-share

a Estimate the answers to the following questions:

1. How high is Mount Everest?
2. How long does it take to climb up and down?
3. How many people climbed it last year?



b Compare your 'guesstimates' with your partner's. Then look up the answers online. Who came closest?

c What's the highest hill or mountain you have ever climbed? Tell your partner about it.

### Mount Everest traffic jam: 'Wished there was policing'

Mariam Ktiri reached the summit of Mount Everest on May 22, only to get stuck in a traffic jam in the mountain's "death zone" on her descent. The German-Moroccan mountaineer talked to DW about the experience.

It was a picture that went around the world: Congestion on the Mount Everest summit ridge captured by Nirmal Purja. German-Moroccan Mariam Ktiri was one of those stuck in it after reaching the summit of the highest mountain on earth at 2:35 a.m. local time.

"Shortly below the summit, the masses ascended towards us. Many of the people were extremely slow. You could see that they were completely exhausted. It took us about an hour and a half to get below the Hillary Step," she told DW.

For an hour and a half, Ktiri was stuck in the so-called "death zone" where humans can't survive long due to how thin the air is. "Thank God I still had enough oxygen. My Sherpa was constantly checking. At that moment I wished there was policing to stop the people and say: 'Wait until those on their descent have climbed down! Everything else makes no sense.'"

Her sense of accomplishment soon gave way to feelings of disillusionment and frustration as she got caught up in the congestion, despite setting off four hours earlier than planned. "I thought: We set off

so early, we didn't even make real breaks," said Ktiri.

"We simply climbed up the mountain in a concentrated manner to avoid this situation. And now on the way back, we were confronted with it. I was angry that people don't think rationally. I tried to signal to those who were coming towards me: Please wait! But they didn't react."

According to Ktiri, the main problem on Everest is those with a lack of climbing experience: "There were some who didn't have a clue. I saw people being dragged by their Sherpas on a short rope as far back as the Khumbu Icefall. If someone can't walk by himself at this point, he is entirely out of place and should turn back."

She hopes that the operators will introduce performance tests to check their clients' mountaineering skills. "The people without a clue are a risk for everyone: for themselves – okay, that's their problem – but also for the others."

According to official estimates, 300 people reached Everest's summit on May 22, a record for a single day. It was a record-breaking spring season in 2019 with

- 1 **to police sth** etw überwachen
- 4 **descent** Abstieg
- 4 **mountaineer** Bergsteiger/-in
- 4 **DW** Deutsche Welle
- 7 **congestion** Stau
- 8 **summit ridge** Gipfelgrat
- 14 **to ascend** aufsteigen
- 27 **to make no sense** keinen Sinn machen
- 28 **accomplishment** Leistung
- 29 **disillusionment** Ernüchterung
- 30 **to get caught up in sth** in etw verwickelt werden
- 31 **despite** trotz
- 31 **to set off** aufbrechen
- 44 **to have no clue** keine Ahnung haben
- 45 **to drag** schleppen
- 48 **to be out of place** fehl am Platz sein



- 63 **to scale** erklimmen  
 70 **corpse** Leiche  
 73 **peak** Gipfel  
 74 **flank** Seite  
 75 **to pass away** versterben  
 77 **high-altitude** Höhen-  
 77 **cerebral edema** Hirnödem  
 83 **psychological upset** psychische Erschütterung  
 104 **mentally** geistig, psychisch

60 around 900 successful summits, though  
 11 lost their lives in the attempt.

**2** One day after reaching Everest's summit, Ktiri scaled Lhotse with her Sherpa. "I'm so glad I climbed Lhotse too,"  
 65 says Ktiri: "It was like a reward after the frustration at the traffic jam on Everest. On Lhotse on May 23, there were maybe a dozen mountaineers on the route. That was simply beautiful – apart from the  
 70 corpse, which sits a few meters below the summit."

Climbers are regularly confronted with deaths on these peaks and, on the Lhotse flank, Ktiri had passed the body of  
 75 Bulgarian Ivan Tomov, who had passed away during his descent a few days earlier due to a high-altitude cerebral edema.

"It looked as if he was looking at the landscape. I was shocked." The feeling  
 80 intensified later when she passed a group of Sherpas carrying a corpse down. "After that I became quite slow." Despite the psychological upset, she didn't think about turning back, says Ktiri. She was  
 85 focused on her big goal.

**3** By reaching the summit at Everest, which sits 8,850 meters (29,029 feet) above sea level, Ktiri completed her collection of the "Seven Summits" – the highest mountains each continent has to  
 90 offer – and all within a year.

Before Everest, Asia's tallest peak, she had scaled Denali (North America, 6,194 meters, 28 May 2018), Elbrus (Europe, 5,642 meters, 13 August 2018),  
 95 Kilimanjaro (Africa, 5,895 meters, 24 September 2018), Mount Vinson (Antarctica, 4,897 meters, 16 December 2018), Aconcagua (South America, 6,962 meters, 12 January 2019) and the  
 100 Carstensch Pyramid (Oceania, 4,884 meters, 23 February 2019). [...]

The Seven Summits were "the project of my life until now" says Ktiri. "Mentally, it made me very, very strong. I proved: If you  
 105 have a goal in mind and you concentrate on it, and above all follow it with discipline, you will always find a way to achieve it. [...]"

(730 words)

Stefan Nestler, *Deutsche Welle*, 2019

## WORKING WITH THE TEXT

### 2 Reading for gist

Skim the text and match three of the headings A to D to paragraphs 1 to 3.

- |                                  |                                     |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A Seven Summits within 12 months | C Clueless climbers – a risk to all |
| B Lhotse attached                | D Encouraging women to take risks   |

### 3 Reading for detail

- a** Sum up each paragraph in your own words.
- b** Describe Mariam Ktiri's experience of climbing Mount Everest.
- c** Comment on the suggestion Ktiri makes in the text that "she hopes operators will introduce performance tests to check their clients' mountaineering skills" (ll.50–52).
- d** Examine how committed and disciplined Ktiri is in relation to achieving her goals.

### 4 Focus on analysis → O2 → S7 → Self-check 1.1

- a** List the negative feelings Ktiri had on reaching the summit of Mount Everest and the positive feelings she experienced on climbing Lhotse.
- b** Examine the use of language to highlight these positive and negative emotions.



## 5 Focus on grammar → G9

a Match the grammar rules 1 to 4 to the sentences A to D below.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. The -ing form is used to shorten clauses, often after a conjunction.                      | A Do you recognise that woman <b>wearing</b> the face mask?                 |
| 2. The -ing form is used (instead of a pronoun and a full verb) in reduced relative clauses. | B After <b>returning</b> from his long trip, he went straight back to work. |
| 3. The -ing form can be used as an adjective.  | C She gave a <b>reading</b> from her latest novel.                          |
| 4. The -ing form can be used as a noun.  | D Would you like to go on a <b>walking</b> tour of London this weekend?     |

 Talking about likes and dislikes

b Look at these examples from the text and say which grammar rules from a (1–4) apply.

1. "Wished there was policing" (l.1)
2. "the main problem [...] is those with a lack of climbing experience" (ll.42–44)
3. "I saw people being dragged by their Sherpas" (ll.45–46)
4. "It was a record-breaking spring season in 2019" (ll.58–59)

## 6 Writing a personal email → S5.3 → Self-check 3.3

Imagine you have a friend whose ambition it is to reach the summit of Mount Everest. Write them an email informing them of Ktiri's story and what they might expect from the experience.

## A STEP FURTHER



## 7 Working with a video → S2

a Before you watch the video "Race to the Pole", go online and see what you can find out about endurance athlete Richard Parks. Write down three interesting facts about him. Compare your facts with a partner's. Share your results with the whole class.



b Now watch the video making notes while you watch. Then give a brief summary.

c Watch the video again and answer the following questions.

1. According to the narrator in the video, who is Richard Parks?
2. What does Richard want to do?
3. How does he prepare for the challenge?
4. What did Richard achieve in the end?



d Go online and search for other extreme/adventure sports athletes and their achievements. Share your results with the rest of your group. Discuss which athlete(s) you admire most, then share the results of your discussion with the class.

e Look at the definition of flow below. Do you think it can help people achieve a personal optimum? Have you experienced something similar? Tell the group.

**Flow** is a special state of total absorption in a task. When in flow, athletes are fully focused on what they are doing, and this heightened attention is associated with a number of positive factors. Many practitioners of extreme sports have experienced flow in their sports careers.