Vikram’s English Academy (ICSE)

Question Bank: Dreaming of the Dawn Wall

1) Describe the geographic features of California?

Ans: California stretches down the West Coast of America and contains a huge range of geographic features as well as a long coast line. California contains the dry Mojave Desert, lots of fertile farmland, massive mountains and deep valleys.

2) What is California also abode to?

Ans; California is also abode to the tallest trees in the world that is the coast redwood, and the bristlecone pine.

3) What is the name of the national park? Where does it lie? What is the significance of the park?

Ans: It is the Yosemite National Park and lies in the Sierra Nevada .The Yosemite is a United Nations World Heritage site that was first recognized as a significant place and protected by law in 1864.

4) Which is the dream destination of rock climbers and what are the other features that the place has?

Ans: Yosemite National Park is a dream destination of rock climbers who wish to scale the valley walls. This place is known worldwide and millions of tourists visit the waterfalls, forests and valleys every year. The awe inspiring rock formations are also known to be incredible

5) What does the term ‘monolith mean? Name the two monoliths mentioned here and also describe them.

Ans: Monolith means one single block of stone. The two monoliths mentioned here are : Half Dome and El Capitan. These huge granite monsters rise up from the valley floor and pose a challenge to even the most experienced climbers.

6) What are the different ways of rock climbing? Elaborate.

Ans: Some people like to scramble across or up rocks as part of a walk whereas others take up the activity much more seriously. Some use special equipment such as ropes, ladders, metal clips (called carabiners) and belays to help them climb. This is known as aid climbing. Others use very little equipments preferring free climbing. Free climbing is climbing without much equipment, using only the body to work out a route up or across the rock face. Free climbers use a safety rope that is attached below them, to save them if they fall off .

7) Who is the very well respected climber in this lesson? Give a brief background.

Ans: Tommy Caldwell is the one person who is very well respected among serious climbers. Born in America in 1978, tommy began climbing at a young age with his father. Soon it became clear that the young boy had a talent and his father helped him to develop it by encouraging him and taking him on climbing trips.

8) Mention the attributes that climbers should have.

Ans: Climbers need to be fit and strong. They need to be flexible and agile. They must be able to endure physical pain and hardship while keeping calm and focused. Tommy has all of these attributes.

9) What were Tommy achievements during his teenage?

Ans: When Tommy was fourteen they went to Europe and climbed Mont Blanc and Matterhorn. When he was sixteen, Tommy signed up to a climbing competition. He surprised a lot of people by winning the competition and becoming the national champion. Over the next few years Tommy trained hard and made his mark in the climbing world.

10) What do we learn about El Capitan?

Ans: El Capitan is one of the two famous monoliths in Yosemite National park. The 3000-foot cliff is so sheer that from a distance it looks like a smooth surface. Free climbers struggle to find edges and ledges in the rock to hold on to

11) Which is the most difficult route up to El Capitan? How many more are there?

Ans: Of the one hundred or more routes up El Capitan only thirteen have been successfully free climbed. Of these the most difficult is the Dawn Wall.

12) Which incident had a huge impact on Tommy and how?

Ans: In 2000, tommy and three other climbers were in Kyrgyzstan climbing in the Pamir – Alai mountain range when they were shot at and then captured by Uzbekistani rebels. After six days of being held hostage, Tommy managed to overpower a guard and get free. The four climbers had to trek 29 km, before they found help. The suffering and fear they had experienced had a deep effect on Tommy and the other climbers. Tommy has been reported as saying that the experience made him realize that if he could cope with being held hostage he could cope with anything.

13) Which disaster followed in 2001? How did he react? What did the doctors do?

Ans: In 2001, disaster struck again. Tommy was working with a table saw when he had an accident and chopped off the top of his index finger. Despite the pain, he acted quickly and put the piece of his finger in ice. When he got to the hospital the doctors were able to sew his finger back together.

14) Did Tommy’s climbing career stop after the second disaster? How did Tommy work on improving his technique?

Ans: No, much to everyone’s surprise Tommy’s climbing technique continued to improve. He had become mentally and physically strong. He knew that he could withstand hunger, thirst and pain. He could keep calm when faced with fear, danger or difficulty. If he came face to face with a challenge he dealt with it head on.

15) What were the efforts he took for achieving his goal?

Ans: Tommy Caldwell trains every day. He runs in the mountains for 12 miles. He trains his muscles with weights and his practises his climbing on a specially built wall in his house.

16) Who is Tommy’s climbing partner? What is their plan?

Ans: Tommy Caldwell climbing partner is Kevin Jorgeson. They planned a route of thirty two pitches to climb up the Dawn Wall.

17) Why are the pitches 14 and 15 some of the most difficult climbs in the world?

Ans: Pitches 14 and 15, are some of the most difficult climbs in the world. One requires the climber to balance carefully on fingertips and toes and spring sideways to catch and hold on to a small bit of rock. For a few milliseconds the climber is high above the earth jumping from one part of a cliff face to another.

18) Mention the date when they began their climb. Describe the weather conditions then.

Ans: Tommy and Kevin began their climb on 27 December, 2014. Sometimes if it wasn’t cloudy or cool enough for them to climb in the day time, they used to climb at night.

19) Trace the ups n downs that both the climbers faced?

Ans: For the first week the pair made good progress, and at the notorious pitch 15, Tommy lcimbed it and moved on, but Kevin didn’t. He fell. The next day he tried again. It wasn’t to be. For ten days Kevin was stuck on pitch 15` His fingers bled, his muscles ached and his spirits were low. Tommy did not want to go too far ahead without Kevin but it looked like he might have to. Then, on the 9th January, Kevin made it through pitch 15.

20) When did they finally reach the top of the Dawn wall? How long did it take them?

Ans: On 9th January, 2015, Tommy Caldwell and Kevin Jorgeson became the first people to free climb up the Dawn Wall.

21) Can we say that the El Capitan Wall Climb is tougher than the Dawn Wall climb? Justify

Ans: No, El Capitan Wall Climb is not tougher than the Dawn Wall Climb. As many people have made it up to El Capitan but climbing Dawn Wall wasn’t easy. The climb up the Dawn Wall had taken nearly eighteen days whereas the climb to El Capitan took around 24 hours.

22) What have you learned from this story? Can you think of any relatable axiom?

Ans: (personal response) axioms:- Try try till you succeed, Failure is the stepping stone to success.