

*"You cannot stay on the summit forever; you have to come down again. So why bother in the first place? Just this: What is above knows what is below, but what is below does not know what is above. One climbs, one sees. One descends, one sees no longer, but one has seen. There is an art of conducting oneself in the lower regions by the memory of what one saw higher up. When one can no longer see, one can at least still know."*

— René Daumal

## **Second Grade: Chief Mountain Trip Preparing your children**

**Background thoughts and preparation: What you need to do to make sure your kids are comfortable and get the most from it.**

### **Why a peak ascent?**

Gaining a peak is an amazing metaphor - it requires effort, it requires us to be aware of our needs and take care of them, it requires us to be aware of the needs of others and take care of them also, it requires us to work together, and it often requires dogged persistence and overcoming the voices that fill us with doubt. And yet when the expansive view spreads out below us then we are exposed to René Daumal's "higher up". The most important piece is that it took our higher self to reach our "higher up" (success depends on it) and even when we are not being our higher self "one can at least still know".

Our goal is to make sure that all the children experience something that they are proud of and that they work together to achieve it.

### **Preparing your child:**

Appropriate food, hydration and clothing are key to mitigating a majority of the risk associated with a journey of this nature. Driving there is always going to be the number one risk.

Colorado weather is notoriously fickle, perhaps we will have temperatures in the 60's, more likely in the 30's, consequently layers are best.



Cai's clothes from a journey up Chief Mountain last Saturday (note the layers).

His system includes: synthetic / wool / silk underwear, synthetic tee, a thin fleece / wool sweater and a thicker jacket topped with waterproof layer.

Hat and gloves (Something to cover the face will also make for happy kids.)

Boots / shoes that will stay dry and wool socks will be far more comfortable if there is snow.



By the way last Saturday it was bitterly cold (it snowed) - he was warm.

Also:

A small backpack with water (we took 2 water bottles each) and a light (weight) lunch with lots of snacks that are manageable with gloves on.

Another key is going to be ensuring a good night sleep on Tuesday and a hearty, warm breakfast on Wednesday morning.

TO ensure that this is a safe, fun trip that creates lots of learning, accompanying parents will meet at 8.30 on Wednesday morning so that we have a very clear plan and everyone knows their role and responsibility.

# Second Grade: Chief Mountain - Session Plan

**Parents: tone setting, safety & logistics planning (15 mins)**

WHY: Create a safe, fun trip with plenty of learning.

HOW: Clearly communicate what is expected of accompanying adults.

WHAT: Highlight - Responsibilities, Risk Management strategies, logistics and learning outcomes

## Responsibilities:

Adults will be given specific children to care for and will make sure that they are with them at all times.

Driving to the site is always going to be the largest risk of any field trip so please read the driving guidelines defined by DWS before agreeing to the task.

## Risk Management:

Steiner & Tort and the the 'Rule of 7's'

Real & Perceived Risk

Risk (R) = consequence (C) x likelihood (L)

A high risk = high consequence and high likelihood and neither can be mitigated.

Risk of loss R- is then balanced with a risk of gain R+.

(If you do not have a sufficient reason for doing something that involves risk why are you doing it?)

With our peak ascent the potential for R+ is potentially great when we are aware of possible consequences and work to increase the likelihood of them.

Hazard	C	L	R	Mitigation	R
Altitude (Acute Mountain Sickness)	3	2	6	Drink plenty of water - watch children for signs (headaches, dizziness) Descend if signs apparent	3
Cold injuries	3	3	9	Pack warm clothes (layers), including hats, proper footwear, wool socks. Watch for signs (quiet, shivering) Be proactive, feel head and hands.	3
Trips & Falls	2	3	6	Brief clearly, keep the group together, stop behavior that will increase the likelihood.	4
Exhaustion	2	3	6	Good night sleep, fuel, (food and water). Again watch for signs.	4
Getting lost / spread out	3	2	6	Keep group together. Our trail is very defined.	3
Road Traffic Accident	5	2	10	Drivers read DWS guidelines and follow them. Be hyper vigilant crossing roads.	5
Medical Conditions				Know each child's medical history and needs before departure.	

Mitigation strategies involve ensuring kids are warm, watered and eating while watching for behaviors and setting ground rules.

Commend worthy actions: helping each other, checking to see if a peer has drunk enough water or is comfortable, spotting a friend, etc.

Kindly reprimand actions that will cause themselves or another injury.

## Logistics:

All cars will meet at the bottom of Squaw Valley Road and make sure that the road looks favorable. Wil will be in front as we go up from here. There will be another briefing for everyone at the parking. (Manage kids)

The main concern = accounting for and communicating everyone's whereabouts and condition.

We will regroup at each of the checkpoints. These will be good places to change layers, eat, drink and toilet.

## Learning Outcomes:

EVERYONE will depart with a sense of accomplishment that will have been gained by working together to make something happen. Everyone will be asked to describe something that they accomplished on the trip.

## **Kids: tone setting, safety & logistics planning (15 mins)**

Story to set tone - world's highest peak? 1st climbed in 1953 (Can you work out how long ago that was?) While you hear the story - listen for some of the things that Hilary & Tenzing did to make sure that they were safe and successful.

### **Story: 1st ascent of Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary**

*At 4 a.m. it was very still. I opened the tent door and looked far out across the dark and sleeping valleys of Nepal. The icy peaks below us were glowing clearly in the early morning light and Tenzing pointed out the Monastery of Thyangboche, faintly visible on its dominant spur 16,000 feet below us. It was an encouraging thought to realize that even at this early hour the Monks of Thyangboche would be offering up devotions to their Gods for our safety and well-being.*

*We started up our cooker and in a determined effort to prevent the weaknesses arising from dehydration we drank large quantities of lemon juice and sugar, and followed this with our last tin of sardines on biscuits. I had removed my boots, which had become a little wet the day before, and they were now frozen solid. Drastic measures were called for, so I cooked them over the fierce flame of the stove and despite the very strong smell of burning leather managed to soften them up. Over our down clothing we donned our wind proofs and on to our hands we pulled three pairs of gloves—silk, woollen and windproof.*

*At 6.30 a.m. we crawled out of our tent into the snow, still a little worried about my cold feet, I asked Tenzing to move off and he kicked a deep line of steps away from the rock bluff which protected our tent out on to the steep powder snow slope to the left of the main ridge. The ridge was now all bathed in sunlight and we could see our first objective, the South summit, far above us. Tenzing, moving purposefully, kicked steps in a long traverse back towards the ridge and we reached its crest just where it forms a great distinctive snow bump at about 28,000 feet. From here the ridge narrowed to a knife-edge and as my feet were now warm I took over the lead.*

*It was with some relief that we finally reached some firmer snow higher up and then chipped steps up the last steep slopes and cramponed on to the South Peak. It was now 9 a.m.*

*As my ice-axe bit into the first steep slope of the ridge, my highest hopes were realized. The snow was crystalline and firm. Two or three rhythmical blows of the ice-axe produced a step large enough even for our oversized High Altitude boots and, the most encouraging feature of all, a firm thrust of the ice-axe would sink it half-way up the shaft, giving a solid and comfortable belay. We moved one at a time. I realized that our margin of safety at this altitude was not great and that we must take every care and precaution. I would cut a forty-foot line of steps, Tenzing belaying me while I worked. Then in turn I would sink my shaft and put a few loops of the rope around it and Tenzing, protected against a breaking step, would move up to me. Then once again as he belayed me I would go on cutting. In a number of places the overhanging ice cornices were very large indeed and in order to escape them I cut a line of steps down to where the snow met the rocks on the west. It was a great thrill to look straight down this enormous rock face and to see, 8,000 feet below us, the tiny tents of Camp IV in the Western Cwm. Scrambling on the rocks and cutting handholds in the snow, we were able to shuffle past these difficult portions.*

*The weather for Everest seemed practically perfect. Insulated as we were in all our down clothing and windproofs, we suffered no discomfort from cold or wind. However, on one occasion I removed my sunglasses to examine more closely a difficult section of the ridge but was very soon blinded by the fine snow driven by the bitter wind and hastily replaced them. I went on cutting steps. To my surprise I was enjoying the climb as much as I had ever enjoyed a fine ridge in my own New Zealand Alps.*

*After an hour's steady going we reached the foot of the most formidable-looking problem on the ridge—a rock step some forty feet high. We had known of the existence of this step from aerial photographs and had also seen it through our binoculars from Thyangboche. We realized that at this altitude it might well spell the difference between success and failure. The rock itself, smooth and almost holdless, might have been an interesting Sunday afternoon problem to a group of expert rock climbers in the Lake District, but here it was a barrier beyond our feeble strength to overcome. I could see no way of turning it on the steep rock bluff on the west, but fortunately another possibility of tackling it still remained. On its east side was another great cornice, and running up the full forty feet of the step was a narrow crack between the cornice and the rock. Leaving Tenzing to belay me as best he could, I jammed my way into this crack, then kicking backwards with my crampons I sank their spikes deep into the frozen snow behind me and levered myself off the ground. Taking advantage of every little rock hold and all the*

force of knee, shoulder and arms I could muster, I literally cramponed backwards up the crack, with a fervent prayer that the cornice would remain attached to the rock. Despite the considerable effort involved, my progress although slow was steady, and as Tenzing paid out the rope I inched my way upwards until I could finally reach over the top of the rock and drag myself out of the crack on to a wide ledge. For a few moments I lay regaining my breath and for the first time really felt the fierce determination that nothing now could stop us reaching the top. I took a firm stance on the ledge and signalled to Tenzing to come on up. As I heaved hard on the rope Tenzing wriggled his way up the crack and finally collapsed exhausted at the top like a giant fish when it has just been hauled from the sea after a terrible struggle.

Probably owing to the strain imposed on him by trouble with his oxygen set Tenzing had been moving rather slowly but he was climbing safely, and this was the major consideration. His only comment on my enquiring of his condition was to smile and wave along the ridge.

The ridge continued as before. I went on cutting steps on the narrow strip of snow. The ridge curved away to the right and we had no idea where the top was. As I cut around the back of one hump, another higher one would swing into view. Time was passing and the ridge seemed never-ending. In one place, where the angle of the ridge had eased off, I tried cramponing without cutting steps, hoping this would save time, but I quickly realized that our margin of safety on these steep slopes at this altitude was too small, so I went on step-cutting. I was beginning to tire a little now. I had been cutting steps continuously for two hours, and Tenzing, too, was moving very slowly. As I chipped steps around still another corner, I wondered rather dully just how long we could keep it up. Our original zest had now quite gone and it was turning more into a grim struggle. I then realized that the ridge ahead, instead of still monotonously rising, now dropped sharply away, and far below I could see the North Col and the Rongbuk glacier. I looked upwards to see a narrow snow ridge running up to a snowy summit. A few more whacks of the ice-axe in the firm snow and we stood on top.

My initial feelings were of relief—relief that there were no more steps to cut—no more ridges to traverse and no more humps to tantalize us with hopes of success. I looked at Tenzing and in spite of the balaclava, goggles and oxygen mask all encrusted with long icicles that concealed his face, there was no disguising his infectious grin of pure delight as he looked all around him. We shook hands and then Tenzing threw his arm around my shoulders and we thumped each other on the back until we were almost breathless. It was 11.30 a.m. The ridge had taken us two and a half hours, but it seemed like a lifetime. Tenzing made a little hole in the snow and in it he placed various small articles of food—a bar of chocolate, a packet of biscuits and a handful of lollies. Small offerings, indeed, but at least a token gift to the Gods that all devout Buddhists believe have their home on this lofty summit. While we were together on the South Col two days before. Hunt had given me a small crucifix which he had asked me to take to the top. I, too, made a hole in the snow and placed the crucifix beside Tenzing's gifts.

Wasting no time, we cramponed along our tracks, spurred by the urgency of diminishing oxygen. Bump followed bump in rapid succession. In what seemed almost miraculous time, we reached the top of the rock step. Now, with the almost casual indifference of familiarity, we kicked and jammed our way down it again. We were tired, but not too tired to be careful. We scrambled cautiously over the rock traverse, moved one at a time over shaly snow sections and finally cramponed up our steps and back on to the South Peak.

### **After Reading:**

We are going to be successful because we are going to: (I hope success is reaching the summit - maybe it is something else)

- Work together
- Look after each other
- Look after ourselves - clothes, food, water
- Work hard - even if it is tough
- Encourage each other

### **At TH:**

Roles: Leader, navigator, chief communicator, back stop, cheer leader, observer

Checkpoints

Sticks analogy (pick up two sticks before reaching the first checkpoint.) 1 stick breaks. Bundle of sticks don't.