Climb every mountain

Comprehension

Read the following passage and answer the questions.

**Cliff hanger**

I rigged the rope ready to abseil, positioned myself at the lip of the drop, and glanced across to Jorge. For about the third time I asked, ‘Are you right to go?’ ‘Yes,’ he said for the third time.

I leant back so that the rope would take my weight as I began to abseil, but instead the rope was completely loose and I fell. I slammed onto the rocks in the corner on my left side, and then slid down the snow tongue. Unless I could stop myself on the snow I was going to die.

Thoughts flashed through my mind: something is going to block me. There is going to be a huge bang against a rock, or I’ll go off the cliff and splat on to the glacier hundreds of metres below. Time was distorted but the words were in my head, I’ll go splat! And then I’ll be dead. I wonder what it’s like to be dead …

Then I vanished over the lip of the cliff.

I know now that Colin grabbed the rope, burning his palms very badly as he tried to stop it rushing through his hands. Jorge may have helped him when he realised that things had gone badly wrong, but it was Colin who checked my fall. He saved my life. All I knew at that stage was that I had stopped and that I was dangling in midair like a piece of meat on a string.

I could not breathe because my harness was pulled up under my diaphragm, so I could not speak to say, ‘Let me down.’ Just below me I could see a little ledge where I would be able to stand and breathe if I could reach it. They could not see me, and there was no move to pull up the rope. Nor did they want to let me fall another inch. I thought, My God! I’m going to suffocate. I’m not going to make it.

The cliff was overhanging, but by swinging and kicking frantically, I was able to hook my left crampon on a ledge and wedge it there. I was able to take just enough weight off the rope
I noticed that my abseiling device, a stitch plate, had jammed on the rope and I realised that this had saved my life. Colin stopped the rope above, but if my stitch plate had not jammed, the rope would have slipped through it as I fell and I would have dropped off the end and fallen to my death.

from Fear No Boundary
by Lincoln Hall with Sue Fear

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Reading for understanding

1. What is happening at the beginning of the story?

2. What caused the narrator’s abseiling attempt to fail?

3. What did the narrator’s body hit?

4. What did the narrator think was going to happen to her?

5. Find three sound words used in the first fifteen lines. What are they? What do they suggest?

6. What happened to Colin’s hands as he saved the narrator’s life?

7. Why couldn’t the narrator breathe?

8. What is the narrator compared to when she is dangling in midair?

9. How did the narrator enable herself to take a couple of breaths?

10. What had stopped the narrator from dropping off the rope and falling to her death?

10 marks
Spelling and vocabulary

On the mountain

conquering Chomolungma (Mount Everest)

Complete the following paragraph using words from the spelling list. The first letters have been given to help you.

The young people’s a had always been to climb Chomolungma (Mount Everest). They knew that the e would be d so ensuring the s of all involved was a top priority.

The a went smoothly until the c reached an a of 6000 metres. Fierce snowstorms made the conditions t and the party realised that their a to reach the s was impossible.

During the d, d struck when an a buried one of the guides. The c was to immediately start digging to r the m. After ten minutes of frantic work, the group a their p and pulled him free.

The e friends had learned from their e but made a promise to return for another attempt.

20 marks

word families

Using the words contained in each box, fill in the spaces below.

1 Climbing Chomolungma is .
2 The narrator placed her life in .
3 She swung over the crevasse.
4 Abseiling her life.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>decision</th>
<th>decided</th>
<th>decisive</th>
<th>decisively</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 Colin acted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 The narrator’s</td>
<td>to use her left crampon enabled her to breathe.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 The narrator</td>
<td>to jump after questioning Jorge.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Colin’s</td>
<td>action saved the narrator’s life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>achieve</th>
<th>achiever</th>
<th>achievable</th>
<th>achievement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 The ascent of Chomolungma is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 The narrator is a quiet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 It is an</td>
<td>to climb a mountain.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 You can</td>
<td>most goals if you are determined.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>descend</th>
<th>descended</th>
<th>descent</th>
<th>descendant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 She is a</td>
<td>of a famous climber.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 The</td>
<td>was difficult.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 The climbers began to</td>
<td>from the summit.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 The narrator</td>
<td>at an alarming rate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Back-of-the-book dictionary**

The Latin word *altus* means ‘high’. The altitude of a mountain is its height above sea level. Using the back-of-the-book dictionary write down the meaning of these words derived from *altus*.

- altar:  
- altimeter:  
- exalt:  
- alto:  

4 marks
Collective nouns

A collective noun is a word used for a collection or group of similar things.

- a plague of insects
- a bunch of bananas
- a band of robbers

Collective nouns in action

Write down the collective noun from the list for each of the phrases below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>choir</th>
<th>team</th>
<th>flock</th>
<th>staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>flight</td>
<td>pack</td>
<td>album</td>
<td>bundle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>library</td>
<td>flotilla</td>
<td>bouquet</td>
<td>swarm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>litter</td>
<td>board</td>
<td>galaxy</td>
<td>forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anthology</td>
<td>crew</td>
<td>kit</td>
<td>gang</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 a ______________________ of birds
2 a _______________________ of oxen
3 a ______________________ of thieves
4 a ______________________ of singers
5 a ______________________ of sticks
6 an _____________________ of stamps
7 a _______________________ of steps
8 a _______________________ of books
9 a _______________________ of pups
10 a _____________________ of cards
11 a ______________________ of ships
12 a ______________________ of flowers
13 a ______________________ of stars
14 an ______________________ of poems
15 a ______________________ of sailors
16 a ______________________ of tools
17 a ______________________ of bees
18 a ______________________ of trees
19 a ______________________ of directors
20 a _____________________ of teachers

20 marks

Completing sentences—collective nouns

Add the correct collective nouns from the brackets to complete the following sentences.

1 The bushrangers fired a __________________ of shots at the __________________ of policemen. (posse fusillade)
2 In the storeroom there was a __________________ of rags, a __________________ of fruit and a __________________ of drawers. (crate bundle chest)
3 A __________________ of lions, a __________________ of antelope and a __________________ of monkeys watched the slow progress of the __________________ of soldiers. (troop pride platoon herd)
4 A __________________ of bread and a __________________ of grapes had been placed on the table. (batch bunch)
5. The millionaire wore a ______________ of pearls around her neck and a ______________ of diamonds on her ring. (cluster string)

6. On the table there were a ______________ of cards, an ______________ of poems and a ______________ of wool. (anthology skein pack)

7. On my aunt’s farm I saw a ______________ of geese, a ______________ of bees, a ______________ of cattle and an ______________ of trees. (hive gaggle orchard herd)

8. An ______________ of ships was following the ______________ of fish around the ______________ of islands. (school armada group)

Punctuation

Statements and questions

A statement begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop.

*Then I vanished over the lip of the cliff.*

A question mark is used at the end of a sentence to indicate that a question is being asked.

*Was I going to live or die?*

Forming questions

Create questions from the following statements using the word given in the spaces below.

1. The mountaineer knew the climb to the summit was dangerous.
   Did ________________

2. Some climbers were trapped by the avalanche.
   Were ________________

   Was ________________

4. Mountain climbing is considered to be an unusual pastime.
   Is ________________

5. The descent from the summit should be easier than the ascent.
   Should ________________

6. Mountaineers often need to carry a supply of oxygen.
   Do ________________