

ENGLISH

CHAPTER 5: THE SUMMIT WITHIN



THE SUMMIT WITHIN

~Summary~

-by Major H P S Ahluwalia

"The Summit Within" is a **chapter** taken from the book "**Higher Than Everest: Memoirs of a Mountaineer**". It is written by **Major H P S Ahluwalia**. The lesson opens with the narrator expressing how he felt as he stood at the **summit of Everest**. While looking at the **vast view of the wide area**, he felt **multiple emotions** rushing through him; among them, the **dominant one** was **humility**. He believed that a man who had been to the **mountains** would not be the same again. It meant that the **experience** and **difficulties** he faced while climbing the mountains had changed him.

The narrator then stated that as soon as he got rid of his **physical exhaustion**, his mind questioned, "**Why people climb mountains?**" Later he said that most people would say, "**Because it is there,**" but the narrator had a more **personal response** to the question. He claimed that the mountains had **attracted** him since **childhood**, and he would feel **miserable** and sad when he was away from them.

Then the narrator **remarked** that **ascending a mountain** had **physical challenges**. Climbing to the summit required **strength, persistence, and willpower**. Later his mind questioned why he had selected Everest in particular. The narrator stated that there was **no perfect answer** to why he climbed Everest. He related it to the reasons why **individuals breathe** and why they **aid their neighbours**.

The narrator had climbed Mount Everest because it was the **world's highest** and most **powerful mountain**. No wonder the journey was **challenging**; he thought it would provide him with a **sense of fulfilment, satisfaction, and joy** when he stood there. He also mentioned that **well-known climbers** sought **assistance** from other climbers. He said that standing on the summit made him realise that the struggle was **worthwhile**. The majority of the climbers, including the narrator, thought that reaching the top would allow them to **communicate with God**. Later, he told how he **bowed down** and made his **submission to God** on the highest mountain.

At last, the narrator and his **companions** had left the **portraits and relics of God on Everest** as they believed it was a **sign of reverence**. He then explained another big summit, the summit within oneself; it was more challenging to climb. However, every climb, whether it was **physical** or **spiritual**, had transformed him **fundamentally**. He claimed that summing Everest had given him the **confidence** to **pursue other goals**. Also, he stated that **climbing the summit within** was even more challenging than climbing Everest.

~Conclusion~

The chapter – The Summit Within teaches a lesson that we should try to overcome any obstacle that comes in our lives by incorporating three qualities such as endurance, persistence and will power. Being steadfast in optimising our inner self can help us achieve greater heights in life. Here, we present you the CBSE Class 8 English Honeydew Prose Summary of The Summit Within that must have helped students to have a detailed understanding of the chapter.

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NCERT SOLUTIONS**Questions (Page No. 79)**
(Comprehension Check)

Question 1. Standing on Everest, the writer was

- a. overjoyed.
- b. very sad.
- c. jubilant and sad.

Choose the right item.

Answer:

- c. jubilant and sad – The author mentioned that he had already done the ‘ultimate’ in climbing and there would be nothing higher to climb and all roads would lead down thereafter.

Question 2. The emotion that gripped him was one of

- a. victory over hurdles.
- b. humility and a sense of smallness.
- c. greatness and self importance.
- d. joy of discovery.

Choose the right item.

Answer:

- b. humility and a sense of smallness – The author mentions that anyone who reaches the peak of Everest can enjoy the panoramic view and look across the miles, and feel the sheer scale of smallness in front of nature’s beautiful creation.

Question 3. “The summit of the mind” refers to

- a. great intellectual achievements.
- b. the process of maturing mentally and spiritually.

- c. overcoming personal ambition for common welfare.
- d. living in the world of thought and imagination.
- e. the triumph of mind over worldly pleasures for a noble cause.
- f. a fuller knowledge of oneself.

Mark the item(s) not relevant.

Answer:

The following item(s) not relevant:

- a. great intellectual achievements.
- c. overcoming personal ambition for common welfare.
- d. living in the world of thought and imagination.
- e. the triumph of mind over worldly pleasures for a noble cause.

Questions (Page No. 80) (Working with the text)

Question 1. Answer the following questions.

- a. What are the three qualities that played a major role in the author's climb?
- b. Why is adventure, which is risky, also pleasurable?
- c. What was it about Mount Everest that the author found irresistible?
- d. One does not do it (climb a high peak) for fame alone. What does one do it for, really?
- e. "He becomes conscious in a special manner of his own smallness in this large universe." This awareness defines an emotion mentioned in the first paragraph. Which is the emotion?
- f. What were the "symbols of reverence" left by members of the team on Everest?
- g. What, according to the writer, did his experience as an Everest climber teach him?

Answer:

- a. The three qualities that played a major role in the author's climb are endurance, persistence and will power.
- b. Although adventure is risky, it is pleasurable too. This implies that climbing a mountain is a great challenge filled with difficulties, but overcoming those hurdles boosts the confidence, endurance and will power of the climber. The author gives the example of the mighty Mount Everest and reaching its summit is an achievement in itself. There is a great sense of exhilaration, joy and fulfillment to being able to scale such greater heights. There is a feeling of victory and happiness. Hence, the experience is not merely physical. It is indeed both emotional and spiritual.
- c. Being one of the mightiest and highest mountains in the world, Mount Everest has its own special charm and beauty. The author found it irresistible due to its beauty, ruggedness and the obstacles that he encountered while climbing its summit. Every ounce of his energy was utilized in climbing the mountain covered with rock and ice. One who decides to climb the Everest cannot give up his/her dream by returning half way even when one's life is at stake. This is because when a person climbs to the summit of a mountain, one is filled with a great sense of exhilaration, joy and fulfillment for being able to scale such greater heights. This gives him/her a sense of extreme joy and happiness and a feeling of victory and satisfaction. These were some of the reasons why the author found the Mount Everest to be extremely irresistible.
- d. Climbing a mountain and reaching its peak successfully requires one's endurance, persistence and will power. Therefore, the experience is not merely physical. It is indeed both emotional and spiritual. It satisfies a climber's eternal love for adventure which gives one a sense of fulfillment, satisfaction and a deep urge to rise over and above the surroundings.
- e. "He becomes conscious in a special manner of his own smallness in this large universe." This awareness defines an emotion of humility in a person.
- f. The author left on Mount Everest a picture of Guru Nanak. Rawat left a picture of Goddess Durga. Phu Dorji left a relic of the Buddha and Edmund Hillary had buried a cross under a cairn (a heap of rocks and stones) in the snow. These were not merely symbols of conquest but of reverence.
- g. As an Everester, the author experienced a great sense of fulfillment and satisfaction. It encouraged him to face the ordeals of life in a determined manner. It taught him that the conquest of internal summit is also equally important compared to climbing a mountain. He realised that it will give him a better and fuller knowledge about himself which no one else other than him can scale to meet his true self.

Question 2. Write a sentence against each of the following statements. Your sentence should explain the statement. You can pick out sentences from the text and rewrite them. The first one has been done for you.

- a. The experience changes you completely.

One who has been to the mountains is never the same again.

- b. Man takes delight in overcoming obstacles.

- c. Mountains are nature at its best.

- d. The going was difficult but the after-effects were satisfying.

- e. The physical conquest of a mountain is really a spiritual experience.

Answer:

- b. Endurance, persistence and will power are the qualities that are required in a climber to overcome the challenges and have a delightful experience.
- c. The majestic beauty of the mountains pose a considerable challenge for a climber as they are the medium of communion with the Almighty.
- d. Although climbing a mountain is a difficult task, but reaching the summit gives a sense of fulfillment and satisfaction to the climber.
- e. Climbing a mountain is not merely a physical activity but it is indeed both emotional and spiritual as mountains are a means of communion with God.

Questions (Page No. 81-82)

(Working with language)

Question 1. Look at the italicised phrases and their meanings given in brackets.

Mountains are nature (nature's best form and appearance)

at its **best**.

Your life is at **risk**. (in danger; you run the risk of losing your life.)

He was **at his** (it was his best/worst performance.)

best/worst in the

last meeting.

Fill in the blanks in the following dialogues choosing suitable phrases from those given in the box.

at hand	at once	at all	at a low ebb	at first sight
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- a. Teacher: You were away from school without permission. Go to the principal _____ and submit your explanation.

Pupil: Yes, Madam. But would you help me write it first?

- b. Arun: Are you unwell?

Ila: No, not _____. Why do you ask?

Arun: If you were unwell, I would send you to my uncle. He is a doctor.

- c. Mary: Almost every Indian film has an episode of love _____.

David: Is that what makes them so popular in foreign countries?

- d. Asif: You look depressed. Why are your spirits _____ today? (Use such in the phrase)

Ashok: I have to write ten sentences using words that I never heard before.

- e. Shieba: Your big moment is close _____.

Jyoti: How should I welcome it?

Shieba: Get up and receive the trophy.

Answer:

- a. Teacher: You were away from school without permission. Go to the principal **at once** and submit your explanation.

Pupil: Yes, Madam. But would you help me write it first?

- b. Arun: Are you unwell?

Ila: No, not **at all** Why do you ask?

Arun: If you were unwell, I would send you to my uncle. He is a doctor.

- c. Mary: Almost every Indian film has an episode of love **at first sight**.

David: Is that what makes them so popular in foreign countries?

- d. Asif: You look depressed. Why are your spirits **at a low ebb** today? (Use such in the phrase)

Ashok: I have to write ten sentences using words that I never heard before.

- e. Shieba: Your big moment is close **at hand**.

Jyoti: How should I welcome it?

Shieba: Get up and receive the trophy.

Question 2. Write the noun forms of the following words adding -ance or -ence to each.

a. endure _____

b. persist _____

c. signify _____

d. confide _____

e. maintain _____

f. abhor _____

Answer:

a. endure **endurance**

b. persist **persistence**

c. signify **significance**

- d. confide **confidence**
- e. maintain **maintenance**
- f. abhor **abhorrence**

Question 3.

- i. Match words under A with their meanings under B.

A	B
remote	difficult to overcome
means	most prominent
dominant	be overcome/overpowered
formidable	method(s)
overwhelmed	far away from

- ii. Fill in the blanks in the sentences below with appropriate words from under A.
 - a. There were _____ obstacles on the way, but we reached our destination safely.
 - b. We have no _____ of finding out what happened there.
 - c. Why he lives in a house _____ from any town or village is more than I can tell.
 - d. _____ by gratitude, we bowed to the speaker for his valuable advice.
 - e. The old castle stands in a _____ position above the sleepy town.

Answer:

i.

A	B
remote	far away from
means	method(s)
dominant	most prominent
formidable	difficult to overcome
overwhelmed	be overcome/overpowered

ii.

- a. There were **formidable** obstacles on the way, but we reached our destination safely.
- b. We have no **means** of finding out what happened there.
- c. Why he lives in a house **remote** from any town or village is more than I can tell.
- d. **Overwhelmed** by gratitude, we bowed to the speaker for his valuable advice.
- e. The old castle stands in a **dominant** position above the sleepy town.