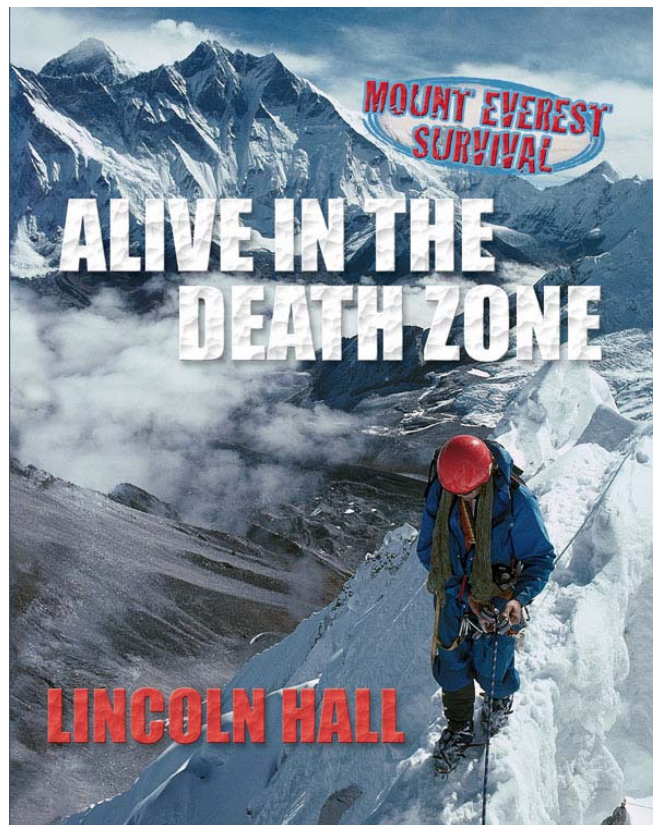


ALIVE IN THE DEATH ZONE MOUNT EVEREST SURVIVAL

LINCOLN HALL



TEACHING SUPPORT KIT

by
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ALIVE IN THE DEATH ZONE
Teaching Support Kit

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1. INTRODUCTION

BOOK SUMMARY

Alive in the Death Zone, Lincoln Hall's story of climbing the world's highest mountain, being left for dead near the summit and his subsequent return to life and safety, is an incredible and exciting adventure that will inspire anyone who reads it. It's a story of survival against all odds using sheer willpower, courage and determination.

Early chapters give young readers an insight into why people climb mountains, Lincoln's early interest in them and the influences that led to his passion for climbing and his quest to climb the world's highest peak. It then focuses on the 2006 expedition when Lincoln reached the summit but was left for dead because he suffered cerebral oedema when he began his descent. Miraculously, after spending a perilous night on a knife-edge crest in the Death Zone, he was found the next morning and began the descent, only to be confronted with more dangers before he reached safety.

Unbeknown to Lincoln, the world, including his family, had been told he was dead, and the miraculous story of his survival made worldwide headline news. Frostbite claimed Lincoln's fingers and toes and he lost nearly twenty kilograms but his remarkable recovery and rehabilitation enabled him to write the bestselling book *Dead Lucky*.

Not only is this a richly informative text, but it makes many demands on its readers, and deserves slow and careful analysis. It raises questions about life and death, compassion, suffering, self-sacrifice, endurance and even about the essence of the human spirit itself.

ABOUT THIS TEACHING SUPPORT KIT

The following Unit of Work is designed for Years 5–8, and is based on group and whole-class participative task experiences as well as pair-work. Six groups of four students is preferable, each group, in turn, reporting or recounting its learnings to the whole class. This will be followed by options for whole-class activities and response. The activities cover a wide range of student age and ability which teachers can adapt to their own circumstances and students.

2. PRE-READING

STEP ONE

- Working in pairs, talk about your existing knowledge of Everest, and what drives people to want to climb it.
- Using the map in the opening end-papers, talk about the following:
 - Find Everest: what do you know about this part of the world? What difficulties for mountain climbers present themselves just from its location? List them.
 - Consult Google: find out all you can about the Himalayas, especially the climate.
- Look at the cover (a PowerPoint image could be used). Imagine you are the climber in the red helmet . . . how would you feel? What do you think the 'death zone' is?
- Look carefully at the photos on the title-page: what feelings do you have for what you see? Beauty or terror?
- Again, look at the image on the contents page. What difficulties can you see in climbing this peak?

STEP TWO

- Students form groups of four and take it in turns to read the Introduction around the group.
- The last two paragraphs are really significant. Discuss Andrew Brash's comment about his self-sacrificing decision to save Hall's life. What would you have done that day?

STEP THREE

- Back in pairs: Using pp. 100–101, 'Equipment in Action', analyse the equipment in detail, including the names and uses of each piece.

STEP FOUR

- Using p. 63, 'What's in My Pack', answer the following:
 - What are the two different kinds of pack?
 - What did the climber wear?
 - Which items were in his pack? List them.
 - What was the total weight?

3. CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

These can be done by allocating tasks to six groups of four students, who will then present their findings to the whole class. [See black-line masters pp. 6–11 of these notes.]

4. POST-READING ACTIVITIES

- Organise a classroom game-show in the style of *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* Draw up questions from the text. The student with the most correct answers wins.
- Using the drama activity of hot-seat, interview first Lincoln and then his rescuer Andrew Brash.
- Write a letter to Hall about his near-death experience and his love of mountaineering.
- Imagine yourself on the mountain alone, as Lincoln was: reflect on what is happening to you, what you can feel, see, hear, smell and touch and your fears. Journal your reflection.
- Write a speech of thanks to the rescuers from Hall's point of view.

GROUP 1

Chapters 1, 2 & 3

- You will be required, as a group, to provide an oral retelling of the following experiences described by Lincoln Hall in this chapter:
 - When Hall was fifteen, what significant events helped to shape his mountaineering desires?
 - Describe his climbing experiences with Mr Booth.
 - What happened at ANU?
 - Where are the Booroomba cliffs?
 - Where did he and his friends train?
- Find Dunagiri on the map . . . where is it?
- Use a PowerPoint slide to show their route to the summit (p. 12).
- Describe the main events in their climb.

GROUP 2

Chapters 4 & 5

Present the information in these chapters in the form of an interview. Group members can take different . Provide brief, succinct details in answer to these questions:

- What is a *mountain face*?
- Explain what *permits* are.
- How dangerous can it be to climb without oxygen? Why?
- What is the *get-fit, climb, recover* program?
- What is *acclimatisation*? A *couloir*? *Snow-blindness*?

GROUP 3

Chapters 7, 8 & 9

- Put together a PowerPoint presentation of the climb from the base camp to Everest's summit. Make the most of the dramatic images, including the granite pyramid of Makalu.
- Present to the whole class.

GROUP 4

Chapter 10

- Choose key passages from this gripping account.
 - Divide them up in the group.
 - Read them to the class using a Reader's Theatre strategy.
- The font is white upon a black background in parts of this chapter. Why do you think this has been done? Is it effective?
- Write your response to this chapter in one sentence. Compare your responses with other members of the group.

GROUP 5

Chapter 11

- Script the rescue as a short play and dramatise it for the class.
- If you wish, you could use a narrator and mime the events.

GROUP 6

Glossary

- From copies of the Glossary on pp. 102–3:
 - Cut each item out.
 - Hand them to class members.
 - Each class member reads out their item and then places it on the noticeboard.
- Collect dice and counters. Using copies of the board-game on the closing endpaper, instruct the rest of the class on how to play the game. Get each group to play the game.