

## Lost and found: the extraordinary story of Shackleton's Endurance epic

### Level 1: Elementary / Pre-Intermediate

#### 1 Warmer

a. Match the historic events with the years in which they happened.

1. Edmund Hilary and Sherpa Tensing became the first people to reach the summit of Mount Everest.
2. The first man walked on the Moon.
3. Christopher Columbus reached America.
4. Roald Amundsen and his group became the first to reach the South Pole.
5. Howard Carter discovered the tomb of the Egyptian pharaoh Tutankhamun.
6. Dutch explorers became the first Europeans to reach Australia.

- a. 1492
- b. 1922
- c. 1911
- d. 1969
- e. 1953
- f. 1606

#### 2 Key words

a. Fill the gaps in the sentences using these key words from the text.

abandon

lifeboat

navigator

stowaway

stuck

1. A \_\_\_\_\_ is someone who hides in a vehicle, ship, or plane without ticket or permission to travel.
2. If you are \_\_\_\_\_, you are in a position where you cannot move.
3. If you \_\_\_\_\_ a place, you leave, especially if it is difficult or dangerous to stay there.
4. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a small boat that the people on a ship can use in an emergency.
5. A \_\_\_\_\_ is someone whose job is to plan the direction in which a ship or plane should travel.

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destination

glacier

insane

remote

uninhabited

6. A \_\_\_\_\_ place is a very long way from other places or people.
7. If a place is \_\_\_\_\_, noone lives there.
8. An \_\_\_\_\_ person has a very serious mental illness.
9. Your \_\_\_\_\_ is the place that you are travelling to.
10. A \_\_\_\_\_ is a large area of ice on a mountain that moves very slowly.

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- 1 The *Endurance* left South Georgia to travel towards Antarctica on 5 December, 1914 with 27 crew members plus a stowaway. Sir Ernest Shackleton, the expedition leader, was planning to establish a base on Antarctica's Weddell Sea coast.
- 2 Less than two days later, the ship had to travel between thick sea ice around the Antarctic continent. For several weeks, the *Endurance* could only move very slowly, and in mid-January, the ship became stuck in the ice.
- 3 The men could do nothing except wait. After nine months of being stuck in the ice, they abandoned the badly damaged ship and moved onto the ice. From the ship, they took food, bibles, books, clothing, tools and – most importantly – three open lifeboats.
- 4 A few weeks later, on 21 November, 1915, the *Endurance* finally sank. Frank Worsley, the ship's captain and navigator, recorded its location, using basic navigational tools. That information made it possible to find the ship more than 100 years later.
- 5 The men started to walk across the ice towards land. But after travelling just seven and a half miles (12km) in seven days, they gave up. "There was no alternative. We had to camp on the ice again and wait until conditions were better," wrote Shackleton.
- 6 When the ice broke apart the following April, the crew took the lifeboats and rowed to Elephant Island, a remote and uninhabited rock. The men were very tired, some had sea sickness, others were very ill and weak. "At least half the men were insane," wrote Frank Wild, Shackleton's second in command.
- 7 But they got there. On 15 April, they reached Elephant Island and the men stood on solid ground for the first time in almost 500 days.
- 8 Nine days later, Shackleton, Worsley and four others took one of the boats another 800 miles (1,300km) across rough seas and in freezing winds to South Georgia. It took 16 days to reach their destination.
- 9 But their long journey was not yet over. Three of the men, including Shackleton, then crossed South Georgia's mountains and glaciers to reach a whaling station on the other side of the island. In August, after several failed attempts, a rescue party left for Elephant Island, where the remaining 22 crewmen were waiting.
- 10 In early 1922, Shackleton launched a new expedition to the Antarctic. On 5 January, while his ship was at South Georgia, he died of a heart attack, aged 47.

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### 3 Comprehension check

a. Answer the questions using information from the article.

1. How many people were on the *Endurance* when it left South Georgia?
2. Who was the leader of the expedition?
3. What happened in mid-January?
4. How far did the men walk after they abandoned the ship?
5. When did the ice finally break up?
6. When did they reach Elephant Island?
7. How many people rowed to South Georgia?
8. How far did they row?
9. How many men crossed the mountains and glaciers in South Georgia?
10. Where was Shackleton when he died?

### 4 Key language

a. Match the words in the left-hand column with those in the right-hand column to make expressions from the text.

- |           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| 1. badly  | a. ground  |
| 2. sea    | b. slowly  |
| 3. rough  | c. attack  |
| 4. solid  | d. party   |
| 5. rescue | e. damaged |
| 6. move   | f. attempt |
| 7. heart  | g. ice     |
| 8. failed | h. seas    |

### 5 Discussion

a. Discuss this statement.

- We must explore the Antarctic more.

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### 6 In your own words

a. Use the internet to find more information about Antarctica. Find the following information and share it with the class.

- Where is it?
- Which are the nearest countries to Antarctica?
- How big is it?
- How high is its highest mountain?
- How many countries have bases there?
- How many people live and work there?
- Which is the warmest month in Antarctica?
- Which is the coldest month?
- What kind of wildlife can you find there?

b. Report your findings to the class.