



PEAK



By Roland Smith
8th Grade Summer Reading Study Guide

We are excited for you to read Peak, by Roland Smith this summer. This is an award-winning book full of adventure and important themes like honesty interdependence, change, hope, and respect. You will be amazed by Peak, the protagonist, and the events that affect his survival while he tries to summit Mount Everest. Mount Everest is the world's highest mountain at 8,848 meters (29,029 ft) above sea level. It is located in the Himalayas on the Nepal-China border. This book is a 2012 Rebecca Caudill Nominee, so you will begin your school year with one step complete in a great optional reading program we have planned for you! Enjoy this amazing story; you may even be motivated to find out more about the awesome Mount Everest and the people in real life who have reached the summit.

Vocabulary Terms to Know: It is necessary to understand the following words in the story. Look up the word on the given page, and try to use context clues to determine the definition. Write the word and the definition on your own paper. If you cannot determine the meaning this way, use a dictionary.

tagging (7-8)	acclimatize (46,111)	HAPE (46)	O's (47)
Sherpa (48, 49)	monk (49)	ABC(86)	
<i>puja</i> blessing ceremony (93)		prayer flags (93, 246)	
Gamow bag (99)	summit, as a noun & verb (130-133)	denouement (13, 242+)	

Answer the following questions in complete sentences on your own paper. Include the page numbers where you found the answers (no pg. numbers necessary for 4, 10, 14,)

1. Why is Peak in serious trouble for climbing and “tagging” skyscrapers in New York?
2. When did Peak truly feel regret and shame for having “tagged” the buildings?
3. Why did the judge agree to Peak leaving with Josh?
4. Do you think it was a wise decision for Peak to go with Josh? Why or Why not?
5. Describe how Peak began his love for climbing.
6. Why does Zopa make Peak and Sun-Jo walk up to the Base Camp and carry extra gear instead of ride?
7. According to pg. 109-110, how does Roland Smith feel about the porters, herders, and yaks on Everest?
8. What is a Molskine and what is its significance in this story?
9. Who is Captain Shek and why is he a threat?
10. Smith writes on pg. 154, “You don’t have to be alone to feel alone.” Describe what this means to you. Write at least three sentences.
11. What is “the death zone”?

12. Why is the phone call from Peak's Mom so important to him?
13. How does the relationship between Peak and Sun-Jo change throughout the novel?
14. Zopa compliments Peak at the end of a climb and Peak says on pg. 161, "It was like a whole tank of O's flowing into my bloodstream." How do compliments make you feel? Why are they so important? Whom do you most like to be complimented by?
15. What does Peak learn from his visit to Everest? Write this as if it is the moral of the story.

Literary Devices:

Similes compare two different things using the words like or as. They usually create a visual picture for the reader. Read the similes from the text below. What visual picture does Roland Smith want you to have as you read? (It may be helpful to go back and read before and after the actual simile.) Answer in complete sentences on your own paper.

1. Pg. 26 Paragraph 2 – "...tearing the tie off his neck like it was an anaconda."
2. Pg. 43 Paragraph 10 – "For a climber, saying that you are stopping by Everest is like saying you are going to stop by and see God."
3. Pg. 63 Paragraph 3 – "...Sun-jo who had picked a more difficult route, scrambled up the rock like a lizard, smiling as he climbed past..."

Personification is when non-living things are given human characteristics to help the reader visualize the scene AND understand the story better. In this novel, Everest, itself, is a character. On page 133, Zopa states, "You can never tell who the mountain will allow and who it will not."

Answer these questions with complete sentences and details:

- a. How does this personification example help you visualize the mountain?
- b. How does this personification example help you understand the story better?
- c. How would it be possible for a mountain to choose who gets to climb and who does not?

Later, on pg. 229, Peak uses this same phrase when he is climbing Everest with Sun-jo. How has the meaning of this personification changed? What does it tell you now about the story; what scene does it paint for you?

Elements of Literature:

Characterization

Peak Marcello is the **protagonist** (main character) in this novel because he goes through the most changes, and it is his voice we hear as we read. **List 12 character traits of Peak.** Use nouns and adjectives – Here are 4 to get you started (you do 8 more).

Fourteen Climber Smart Writer

There are many other minor characters in Peak. Minor characters are usually added to a story to help the reader understand the major character. They are also important to the story's plotline.

Choose 4 of the following minor characters. Answer the following questions in complete sentences on your own paper about each one that you choose:

- Who is the minor character?
- What is his/her relationship to/with Peak?
- How does this minor character affect who Peak is and who he becomes?

Peak's Mom
Joshua Wood

The "Two Peas", Patrice & Paula
Zopa

Rolf
Holly Angelo

Sun-jo
Vincent

Conflict

There are five types of conflicts in literature

Man vs. Man (One character against another)

Man vs. Self (Character(s) against their own beliefs)

Man vs. Society (Character(s) against the rules of society)

Man vs. Nature (Character(s) against the forces of nature)

Man vs. Fate (God) (Character(s) against their own destiny)

Peak includes all of these conflicts. **Give one text example, in a complete sentence, that demonstrates each of the above conflicts.**

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Other titles you may enjoy by Roland Smith: The Cryptic Hunters, Elephant Run, Zach's Lie, Thunder Cave

Cool Mount Everest information & videos:

<http://www.panoramas.dk/fullscreen2/full22.html>

<http://adventure.nationalgeographic.com/everest.html>