

WORDS

- **adapt** = to get used to a new situation
- **admire** = to respect someone because they have special talents
- **altitude** = the height of an object above sea level
- **ancestor** = a member your family who lived long ago
- **business** = company
- **century** = a period of a hundred years
- **conquer** = here: to climb a difficult mountain
- **custom** = tradition
- **decade** = a period of ten years
- **even though** while
- **expedition** = a journey or trip to a dangerous place; it must be carefully organized
- **foundation** = organization that collects money for someone
- **goods** = products
- **guide** = a person who shows you or leads you to places
- **health care** = an government organization that looks after all the people of a country
- **height** = how tall something is
- **improve** = to make better
- **income** = the money that you get when you work
- **lodge** = a house or hotel in which people who go on expeditions or safaris can stay
- **mountaineer** = mountain climber
- **oxygen** = a gas that is in the air and that we need to breathe
- **physical** = about the body
- **rely** = depend
- **remote** = far away
- **source** = place where something comes from
- **strength** = power
- **trade** = to exchange, buy and sell
- **valley** = low land between two mountains, usually with a river flowing through it
- **vehicle** = a machine with an engine that takes people from one place to another
- **view** = see
- **water power plants** = buildings that make electricity out of water power
- **worship** = pray or say religious words to god
- **yak** = an animal in Central Asia that looks like a cow with long hair

Sherpas are people who live in the northeastern part of Nepal, in the **valleys** of the Himalaya Mountains. There are about 40,000 sherpas, many of which live near Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain.

Sherpas probably came to Nepal from Tibet in the early part of the 16th **century**. They still have many **customs** and traditions of the Tibetan people and they also dress in Tibetan clothes.

Most sherpas are Tibetan Buddhists. They have no written language and **worship** the mountains around them, which they **view** as the home of the gods. Mount Everest, for example, is called Chomolungma, the Mother of Gods.

At first the world did not know very much about the sherpas. They lived alone in their villages, **traded goods** and grew corn and potatoes. When the British started mountain climbing **expeditions** in the 20th century they used sherpas as **guides**. With the help of **yaks** sherpas helped **mountaineers** bring their heavy loads into great **heights**.

Over the years sherpas have been **admired** for their **physical strength**. They need less **oxygen** to breathe and can work better at high **altitudes** and in thin air. Even today sherpas **rely** on walking to move around. There are no cars or other **vehicles**.

In 1953 a sherpa named Tensing Norgay and Edmund Hillary, a **mountaineer** from New Zealand, became the first people to get to the top of Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain.

Helping tourists get to the top of high mountains has become a great **source** of **income**. While mountain climbers pay around \$ 60,000 for an **expedition**, sherpas earn \$2,000 and more on a trip. Some of them have even started their own **business**, or operate hotels and **lodges** for tourists.

Even though sherpas know the region better than anyone else they risk their lives on **expeditions**. About a third of the people who have died trying to **conquer** Mount Everest have been sherpas.

In the last few **decades** many international organizations have helped sherpas **improve** their life. A **foundation** set up by Sir Edmund Hillary has brought **health care** and modern medicine to **remote** villages. **Water power plants** and hospitals have also been set up.

The tourist industry has made life easier for most sherpas. Many have **adapted** to a more western way of life **even though** some of them still live as their **ancestors** did many **centuries** ago.



1. Answer the questions

Where do most sherpas live? _____

How many still live there today? _____

Where did they originally come from? _____

What is their religion? What do they worship? _____

What did sherpas do before mountaineering started? _____

Who was the first sherpa to climb Mount Everest? _____

Which animals do sherpas use to carry things? _____

How much can sherpas earn by guiding an expedition? _____

What has been done to make the life of sherpas better? _____

2. True or False

	T	F
Most sherpas live in the valleys of the Himalaya mountains.		
Sherpas were farmers and traders before they started to earn money as mountain guides.		
Sherpas are mostly Muslims.		
Llamas are use to bring goods and other things to paces in the mountains.		
Tensing Norgay was the first sherpa to get to the top of Mount Everest.		
Sherpas do not use any cars.		
All sherpas have their own mountain-climbing companies.		
Over the past decades a lot have been done to help the sherpas.		
30% of all people who have died climbing Mount Everest have been sherpas.		

3. Fill in the correct words from the box

There are about 40,000 sherpas who live in _____ regions of the Himalaya Mountains. They came there from _____ sometime in the 16th _____. Today, sherpas still live in their _____ way, but some of them have _____ to a more modern way of life.

At the beginning of the 20th century British mountain climbers started _____ the mountains of the Himalaya region. They took sherpas with them as _____ because they were able to _____ better in the thin air. They rely on _____, animals that can carry heavy loads.

Tensing Norgay was the first sherpa who _____ the top of the world's highest mountain, Mount Everest, together with Edmund Hillary. Today many sherpas _____ their money by leading tourists to the top of the Himalayas. An _____ can earn them \$2,000 and more.

In the past _____ many organizations have started to help the sherpas. Sir Edmund Hillary set up a _____ that built schools, hospitals and gave them _____. Still, many sherpas live in the same way their _____ did hundreds of years ago.

isolated**Tibet****adapted****ancestors****breathe****century****decades****earn****electricity****expedition****exploring****foundation****guides****reached****traditional****yaks**

Key

True or False

	T	F
Most sherpas live in the valleys of the Himalaya mountains.	✓	
Sherpas were farmers and traders before they started to earn money as mountain guides.	✓	
Sherpas are mostly Muslims.		✓
Llamas are use to bring goods and other things to paces in the mountains.		✓
Tensing Norgay was the first sherpa to get to the top of Mount Everest.	✓	
Sherpas do not use any cars.	✓	
All sherpas have their own mountain-climbing companies.		✓
Over the past decades a lot have been done to help the sherpas.	✓	
30% of all people who have died climbing Mount Everest have been sherpas.	✓	

Fill in the correct words from the box

There are about 40,000 sherpas who live in **isolated** regions of the Himalaya Mountains. They came there from **Tibet** sometime in the 16th **century**. Today, sherpas still live in their **traditional** way, but some of them have **adapted** to a more modern way of life.

At the beginning of the 20th century British mountain climbers started **exploring** the mountains of the Himalaya region. They took sherpas with them as **guides** because they were able to **breathe** better in the thin air. They rely on **yaks**, animals that can carry heavy loads.

Tensing Norgay was the first sherpa who **reached** the top of the world's highest mountain, Mount Everest, together with Edmund Hillary. Today many sherpas **earn** their money by leading tourists to the top of the Himalayas. An **expedition** can earn them \$2,000 and more.

In the past **decades** many organizations have started to help the sherpas. Sir Edmund Hillary set up a **foundation** that built schools, hospitals and gave them **electricity**. Still, many sherpas live in the same way their **ancestors** did hundreds of years ago.