

SENIOR CITIZENS SCALE MOUNT EVEREST

Yuichiro Miura spent three long years training for his expedition to Mount Everest. Every night, he slept in a low-oxygen chamber to get his body accustomed to the thin mountain air. At dawn, he would set out on a several-mile-hike around Tokyo, all wearing weights strapped around his ankles and a twenty-kilo knapsack on his bag. In 2008, Miura's rigorous preparations paid off, and he succeeded in reaching the summit of the world's highest mountain at the surprisingly advanced age of seventy-five.



At a time of life when most people are happy to stay at home and relax, a growing number of senior citizens have made it their mission to conquer Mount Everest. The trend began in 1999, when sixty-year-old Lev Sarkisov won the title of oldest climber to scale the mountain. With this feat, Sarkisov proved that older climbers had the stamina to reach the summit, and additional climbers began competing against each other for the honor

of breaking his record. In 2000, a sixty-three-year-old Japanese climber managed the climb, and in 2001, a sixty-four-year-old American climber broke that record. Since then, the record has been broken about once a year, on average. The title currently belongs to Min Bahadur Sherchan, a Nepalese climber who reached the top of Mount Everest when he was seventy-six.

There is an especially large number of elderly Japanese on Mount Everest, as they consider mountain climbing to be a good way to stay fit and healthy. "I feel like I am in my forties or thirties," Yuichiro Miura said before his 2008 climb. Most elderly climbers, however, don't reach Miura's level of preparation, and experts worry that the physical challenges of climbing such a dangerous mountain can be too much for many senior citizens. They point out that in 2008, more than 60 percent of 1,193 mountain accidents around the world (including 281 deaths) involved climbers over the age of fifty-five. In 2009, nine older Japanese climbers, mostly in their sixties, died on Everest within the space of one day as a result of bad weather conditions!

According to a study conducted by American researchers, the risk of dying on Mount Everest is three times as great for people over the age of sixty as it is for climbers age forty or younger (5 percent as compared to 1.6 percent). Of those who actually reach the summit, one in four senior citizens end up dying on the mountain, compared to only 2.2 percent of younger climbers. The research team, led by Professor Raymond Huey, is not impressed by the new records constantly being set and recommends that older climbers stay away from Mount Everest and other high mountains.

Answer the questions in English, according to the article. In questions 2 and 3, circle the number of the correct answer. In the other questions, follow the instructions.

1. What is the main subject of lines 1–7?

COMPLETE THE SENTENCE.

How _____.

2. What can we infer about Lev Sarkisov from lines 8–17?

- i. He was considerably older than other people who had scaled Mount Everest before him.
- ii. He competed against other climbers for the title of oldest climber to scale Mount Everest.
- iii. He was fitter than many of the climbers who reached the top of Mount Everest after him.
- iv. After becoming the oldest climber to scale Everest, he decided to stay at home and rest.

3. What are we told in lines 8–17?

- i. When Min Bahadur Sherchan reached the top of Mount Everest.
- ii. What started the trend of senior citizens trying to scale Mount Everest.
- iii. How often people try to break the record of oldest mountain climber.
- iv. When people over the age of sixty first started to climb Mount Everest.

4. How is Yuichiro Miura different from most elderly mountain climbers? (lines 1–7, 18–25)

ANSWER: _____

5. What do the examples mentioned in lines 18–25 seem to prove?

ANSWER: _____

6. What is explained in lines 26–31?

COMPLETE THE SENTENCE.

What _____.

7. COMPLETE THE SENTENCE. (lines 18–31)

Although the Japanese think _____,
researchers _____.