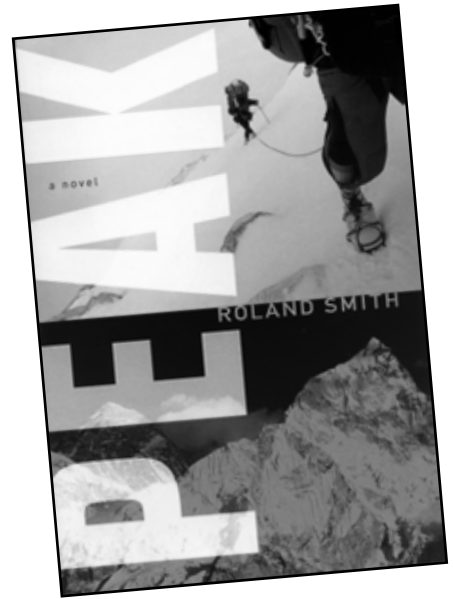


# Who Is the Real Hero?



based on the book *Peak*  
by Roland Smith  
Grades: 6-8

## About the book

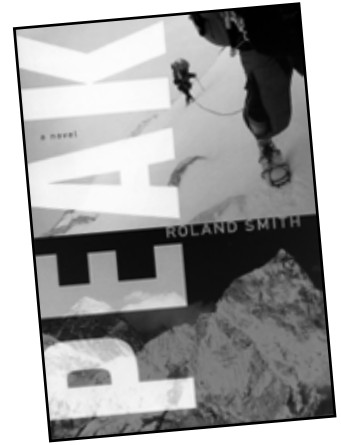
This is a captivating adventure story about Peak, a 14-year-old climbing fanatic boy who is trying to fill a void in his life. Peak has a loving family that he doesn't quite appreciate, and a famous but absent mountain climbing father whom he longs to know. After a serious misadventure in New York City, Peak finds himself at the base of Mount Everest with his biological father, Josh. Peak soon realizes that his father has an alternative motive for rescuing him from Juvenile Detention. Josh, as Peak calls him, wants the publicity of his son being the youngest person to reach the summit of Mount Everest. As the story unfolds Peak learns about honesty, trust, courage, and friendship, and himself, as he pursues what may not be his ultimate aspiration after all.

## Set the Stage

*Use some of these items to engage the students in the topic:*

- Introduce the book and access prior knowledge pertaining to mountain climbing, and pushing oneself to the limit to obtain a goal.
- Discuss why someone would want to climb the highest mountain in the world, and why someone would be willing to risk their life to accomplish a goal.
- Introduce the author and visit his Web site. Have students e-mail questions to Roland Smith about his book. (This site also includes a curriculum guide for *Peak*.)
- Pinpoint Mt. Everest, Tibet, China, and other locations mentioned in the storyline on a world map. Refer to the map throughout the story.
- Show video/pictures of Mount Everest and mountain climbing.
- Have students create a three dimensional model of Everest. Starting at the base use the model as a time line and word wall, having students add vocabulary words, and illustrations of main characters, events, camps, as they are introduced in the story.
- Organize literature circles for book discussions.
- Ask students to keep a journal, or moleskin, as they read the story documenting main events, characters, and personal reflections.

# Who Is the Real Hero?



## Review

After reading the book, ask groups to discuss the following and then share with class:

- What is the main theme of this story?
- Who are the main characters of the story and what are some of their character traits?
- Who are the Sherpas and why are they important?
- Who is the hero of the story? Why?
- Was Peak a hero even though he did not reach the summit? Why or why not?
- Was Peak's famous father a hero? Why or why not?
- Which character in the story do you admire the most? Why?
- What does the following quote mean?: *The mountain is in charge of the climbers, it decides if it wants to be climbed or not and who deserves to make it to the top. It shows how few people there are who understand Everest.*
- What person in the story do you think Peak respected the most?
- Do you think the mountain could be a metaphor? For what?
- Do you think Peak found what he was looking for?