

from Into Thin Air (page 538)** Active Reading SkillBuilder****Determining a Writer's Motives**

When choosing which events and people to include in their eyewitness accounts, writers must decide which material will best serve their purposes. Possible motives for writers of eyewitness accounts are listed in the chart below. As you read Krakauer's account, look for clues to his motives for writing. Note an example from the selection that demonstrates each motive. At the bottom of the chart, add one other motive and example from the selection.

Krakauer's Motives	Examples
To record the facts for history	
To analyze mistakes in order to prevent future problems	
To explain his own behavior	
To explain the behavior of others	
To _____	

from Into Thin Air (page 538)**Literary Analysis SkillBuilder****Word Choice and Tone**

Word choice involves a writer's selection of words, phrases, and figures of speech that best express the writer's thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. Word choice often reveals the **tone**, or the writer's attitude toward the subject. Choose two passages from the selection that convey the author's attitude about what happened on Mount Everest. Then record the tone of each passage and the words that convey the tone.

Passage (page _____)**Tone of passage****Words that convey the tone****Passage (page _____)****Tone of passage****Words that convey the tone**

from Into Thin Air (page 538)**Words to Know SkillBuilder****Words to Know**

cognizant

critical

hindsight

meander

obstinacy

compulsively

escalate

initiative

obscuring

supplemental

A. Complete the analogies with one of the words above. In an analogy the last two words must be related in the same way that the first two are related.

1. STROLL : WALK :: wander : _____
2. DISPLAYING : HIDING :: revealing : _____
3. UNAWARE : KNOWLEDGEABLE :: uninformed : _____
4. EXTRA : SURPLUS :: additional : _____
5. LESSEN : INCREASE :: decrease : _____

B. Decide which word from the word list belongs in each numbered blank. Then write the word on the blank line on the right.

1. Where did I acquire the (1) to take on this challenge? _____
(1)
2. I had an irresistible urge to try white water rafting, and I pursued this goal (2). _____
(2)
3. When I had some doubts, my stubbornness won out. By sheer (3), I followed through with this challenge. _____
(3)
4. I went white water rafting, but the outcome was not all I had imagined. I learned, sadly, that preparation is (4). _____
(4)
5. Knowing nothing about this sport, I almost crashed into the water. I was unprepared—but that is (5). _____
(5)

C. Suppose you are the writer of an advice column. A reader asks for advice about trying a risky sport that he or she knows very little about. Write a reply to this writer. Use at least **four** Words to Know in your column.

from Into Thin Air (page 549)**Grammar SkillBuilder: Choosing Precise Verbs**

Key Concept: Using precise verbs helps writers to eliminate unnecessary adverbs and create concise, realistic prose.

Choosing Precise Verbs

A **precise verb** is one that expresses most exactly the action that occurs. Precise verbs eliminate the need for other explanatory modifiers, such as adverbs. Using precise verbs affects tone by layering connotations onto the action described. Notice the precise verbs Jon Krakauer uses in the following lines from his book *Into Thin Air*.

"Shortly after noon, Stuart Hutchinson, John Taske, and Lou Kasischke had gone past on their way down with Lhakpa and Kami, but Weathers **elected** not to accompany them . . ."

" . . . 'Come down with me,' I **implored**."

Activity

In each sentence replace the underlined word or words with a precise verb.

Example: Ever since Unsoeld went up Everest, Jon Krakauer dreamed of climbing it himself.

Rewritten: Ever since Unsoeld conquered Everest, Jon Krakauer dreamed of climbing it himself.

1. It was a moment Jon had looked forward to for most of his life.
2. Mindful of his low oxygen, Jon stayed at the top for only the briefest of time.
3. Adams saw the gathering thunderheads for what they were.
4. Andy thought uneasily about his air.
5. Yasuko tried very hard to overcome the steepest part of the Step.
6. Others climbed quickly around Jon as he waited.
7. Andy said over and over that all the bottles were empty.
8. Andy didn't believe them when they disagreed.
9. At the time, Jon was annoyed that Andy was not paying attention to him.
10. Beck cautiously followed in the footprints of the person before him.
11. Rob thought carefully about Beck's vision problem.
12. The descent absolutely required complete attention.
13. Andy shouted loudly his reply but the wind whipped his words away.
14. Jon threw out the pack and hoped it landed where he would find it.
15. Jon certainly believed that Andy Harris reached the tent.

from Into Thin Air (page 538)**Selection Quiz**

Recall the events in Krakauer's eyewitness account and then answer the questions.

1. When he reaches the top of Mount Everest, why is Krakauer in a hurry to start back down?

2. What happens when Andy Harris adjusts Krakauer's oxygen valve?

3. Why does Beck refuse to continue climbing down?

4. How does a change in the weather add to the difficulty of Krakauer's downward climb?

5. Why does Krakauer think that Andy Harris has arrived safely at Camp Four?

from Into Thin Air (page 538)**Selection Test**

A. The author's choice of words establishes a tone and tells you something about the author's feelings. Read each passage from the selection below and circle the words or phrases that are most important in establishing the tone. Then, in the box to the right, describe the tone or feelings expressed in the passage. (10 points each)

Words That Establish the Tone	Author's Tone/Feelings
1. "... I left everything in my pack and stayed on top of the world just long enough to fire off four quick shots of Andy Harris and Anatoli Boukreev posing in front of the summit survey marker."	
2. "Some minutes later I was overwhelmed by a disturbingly familiar feeling of suffocation. ..."	
3. "Fifteen minutes of dicey, fatiguing crampon work brought me safely to the bottom of the incline . . . and another ten minutes after that I was in camp myself. I lunged into my tent with my crampons still on, zipped the door tight, and sprawled across the frost-covered floor. ..."	

B. Write the letter of the best answer. This exercise is continued on the next page.
(5 points each)

- _____ 1. What was Krakauer most worried about as he began his descent?
- the approaching storm
 - his dwindling oxygen supply
 - his weakness from exhaustion
 - the climbers who were on the way up
- _____ 2. As the author tells about his interactions with other people during his descent from the summit, the mood is mainly one of
- triumph.
 - gratitude.
 - grief.
 - regret.

- _____ 3. One reason for Krakauer's failure to recognize that the guide, Andy Harris, might be in trouble was that
- Andy's behavior was totally normal.
 - Krakauer had been told never to question a guide's judgment.
 - Mike Groom insisted that Andy was fine.
 - there was no way of proving that what Andy said was wrong.
- _____ 4. How did Krakauer feel when Beck Weathers decided to wait for Mike rather than accept his offer of help?
- worried
 - embarrassed
 - relieved
 - puzzled

C. Words to Know. Write the letter of the best answer. (4 points each)

- _____ 1. If you are cognizant of something, you are
- tired of it.
 - aware of it.
 - afraid of it.
- _____ 2. A person known for obstinacy is
- stubborn.
 - generous.
 - brave.
- _____ 3. As a conflict escalates, it becomes
- less violent.
 - random.
 - more intense.
- _____ 4. A person who takes the initiative is most likely to
- avoid conflict.
 - wait for help.
 - begin a task.
- _____ 5. If a trail meandered, it went
- back and forth.
 - straight.
 - down sharply.

D. Answer one of the following questions based on your understanding of the selection. Write your answer on a separate sheet of paper. (15 points)

- On the day Jon Krakauer climbed down from the summit of Mt. Everest, some of the other climbers died. Why did Krakauer survive, and how did he feel about it later? Include at least **three** factors that contributed to his survival.
- How did the thin air at the top of Mt. Everest affect Krakauer? Be specific. Describe at least **three** ways in which it affected how he felt and what he did.

E. Linking Literature to Life. Answer the following question based on your own experience and knowledge. Write your answer on a separate sheet of paper. (15 points)

Do you think that Krakauer deserves any blame for what happened to the other climbers? Do you think that he feels that he deserves blame? Explain your views.