

Footprints in the Snow

In 1951, master climber Eric Shipton was ascending Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world. He and his team were exploring when they saw a bloodcurdling sight. There were giant footprints in the snow! Each footprint measured about 13 inches (33 cm) long. Shipton and his climbers followed the tracks for about one mile (1.6 km). He said later that it was not the first time he had seen mysterious footprints like these on Mount Everest. This time, though, he recorded the **evidence** with a camera.

Eric Shipton was a famous explorer. His incredible pictures of the **mammoth** footprints created excitement all over the world. And, there was more to the story. A man named Sen Tensing was one of Shipton's guides. Tensing said that he and others had once before caught a glimpse of the baffling creature that had made the prints. He described it as a yeti, a wild man. This barefoot creature had reddish-brown fur on half of his body. The yeti was over five feet (1.52 m) tall. Shipton had someone question Tensing further about the event. Shipton said that he believed Tensing. The explorer also said that he was certain the footprints were not made by a bear or a mountain ape.



Some others are not **convinced**. Some think that the huge footprints were made by a bear that often walks on two legs. But, Shipton and his men followed the tracks for one mile (1.61 km). Would a bear have walked that far on two legs when it could more easily have run on four? Others say that Tensing saw a mountain ape. But, mountain apes have five toes, and these footprints had only four. Some scientists think that the footprints were made by a smaller animal. Then, the sun melted them so that they looked bigger. Shipton said that the footprints were fresh. Could the sun have had time to melt them? Or, did the explorers really **chance upon** the footprints of a strange, wild man of the mountain?

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Answer the questions.

1. What is a *yeti*? Write your answer in a complete sentence.

2. Tensing said the yeti he saw had all of the following features except
- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| A. reddish-brown fur. | B. bare feet. |
| C. fur all over his body. | D. large feet. |

Write **T** for true or **F** for false.

3. _____ Eric Shipton was an explorer in the 1950s.
4. _____ Shipton saw strange tracks in the snow on Mount Fuji.
5. _____ Sen Tensing was Shipton's personal chef.
6. _____ Some scientists think the footprints melted in the sun.
7. _____ Mountain apes have four toes on each foot.
8. Choose the phrase that best completes the following sentence:
Mount Everest is _____.
- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| A. in North America | B. the tallest mountain on Earth |
| C. a mountain range in Asia | D. none of the above |
9. The explorers followed the strange tracks in the snow for
- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| A. one yard. | B. one kilometer. |
| C. 1,000 yards. | D. one mile. |
10. Eric Shipton probably did not believe that the tracks were made by a bear because
- | | |
|---|--|
| A. bears have three toes on each foot. | B. bears do not walk that far on two legs. |
| C. bears do not have reddish-brown fur. | D. bears do not have large feet. |
11. What is the main idea of the passage? What details help you answer this question?

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