



Mt. Washington Printable Reading Comprehension

Grade Level: 5 | Word Count: 440 | Lexile 900

Mt. Washington, located in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, is the highest peak in the northeastern United States. Rising to 6,288 feet, it is famous not only for its height but also for its extreme and unpredictable weather. At the summit, winds have been recorded at over 200 miles per hour, and snow can fall in any month of the year. Because of this, the mountain has earned the nickname "Home of the World's Worst Weather."

Climbers and hikers from around the world come to Mt. Washington for the challenge and the breathtaking views. Trails such as the Tuckerman Ravine Trail are popular but demanding. The climb requires preparation, strength, and respect for the mountain's dangers. Even experienced hikers are warned that conditions can change suddenly, turning a sunny day into a storm within minutes.

Besides hiking, there are other ways to reach the top. The Mt. Washington Auto Road allows cars to drive to the summit during warmer months, while the historic Cog Railway has been carrying passengers up the steep slopes since 1869. Both routes offer visitors dramatic scenery and a chance to experience the mountain's unique environment.

Mt. Washington is not just a tourist destination. Scientists study its weather patterns at the Mt. Washington Observatory, located at the summit. The data collected helps meteorologists understand storms and climate. For New Englanders, the mountain is also a symbol of endurance, strength, and natural beauty.

1. What makes Mt. Washington especially famous besides its height?

- a) Its location in New England
- b) Its unpredictable and extreme weather
- c) Its wildlife and forests
- d) Its size compared to mountains in the Rockies

2. What is the main reason hikers are warned to prepare carefully before climbing?

- a) The mountain has steep cliffs and dangerous animals.
- b) The summit has very little oxygen.
- c) Weather can change quickly and become dangerous.
- d) The trails are not clearly marked.

3. How does the Cog Railway contribute to the mountain's importance?

- a) It allows scientists to transport weather equipment.
- b) It brings tourists to the summit, making it more accessible.
- c) It helps hikers avoid carrying heavy gear.
- d) It is the fastest way to reach the top of any mountain.

4. Which idea best summarizes the passage?

- a) Mt. Washington is only for expert climbers.
- b) Mt. Washington is dangerous and should be avoided.
- c) Mt. Washington is a place of challenge, research, and natural wonder.
- d) Mt. Washington is the tallest mountain in the world.

5. Compare the Tuckerman Ravine Trail and the Auto Road. Which statement is most accurate?

- a) Both are natural trails that require climbing skill.
- b) One is for hiking on foot, while the other allows cars to reach the summit.
- c) Both are only open during the winter months.
- d) One is for scientists, while the other is for tourists.

6. Why is the Mt. Washington Observatory important?

- a) It warns hikers about trail conditions.
- b) It collects weather data to help understand storms and climate.
- c) It provides shelter for tourists during storms.
- d) It records the number of hikers each year.

7. What does the author suggest about Mt. Washington's meaning for New Englanders?

- a) It is mostly known as a ski resort.
- b) It is a symbol of beauty and strength.
- c) It is rarely visited by local people.

Answer Key

1. b) Its unpredictable and extreme weather
2. c) Weather can change quickly and become dangerous
3. b) It brings tourists to the summit, making it more accessible
4. c) Mt. Washington is a place of challenge, research, and natural wonder
5. b) One is for hiking on foot, while the other allows cars to reach the summit
6. b) It collects weather data to help understand storms and climate
7. b) It is a symbol of beauty and strength