

# Tom Crean Story Comprehension

## Tom Crean- An Irish Explorer

Tom Crean was born in Co. Kerry in 1877. His parents were farmers. Tom dreamed of one day becoming a sailor. When he was 15 he stole a suit and some money and went to join the Royal Navy.

Tom's first expedition was with Captain Robert Scott on the ship 'Discovery'. Their aim was to be the first explorers to reach the South Pole. Their ship got into difficulty along the way, getting stuck in ice for almost two years. Despite this, they set a record as the explorers that got the closest to the South Pole. They were just 575 miles from their goal.

They tried again a few years later in 1911. The men boarded the ship 'Terra Nova', along with 16 others. While on their way, Captain Scott decided that only five of the men should finish the journey. Tom was not chosen and was devastated. While Scott's team did manage to reach the South Pole, Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen who had gotten there first, beating them. On their return journey, Scott and his four companions died of frostbite due to a severe drop in temperatures.

Tom joined Ernest Shackleton on an expedition to Antarctica in 1914. This mission was named 'Endurance', after the boat on which they would travel. Their aim was to walk across Antarctica, from coast to coast. While on their way, their boat became stuck in ice for almost ten months. This brought them miles off course with no means of communication. After many months, the boat was crushed by ice. The team took refuge on Elephant Island. Tom led a small team back to South Georgia, where the mission had begun. He was able to get help and Shackleton's team were saved. Tom returned to Ireland and opened a pub called 'South Pole Inn' in Annascaul, Co. Kerry. He died in 1938.



## Question Sheet

1. Where and when was Tom Crean born?

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2. At what age did Tom join the Navy?

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3. Who led the expedition 'Discovery'?

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4. What year did the 'Terra Nova' expedition begin?

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5. How did Captain Scott and his team die?

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6. What was the name of the ship that Ernest Shackleton led?

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7. Where did the Endurance mission begin?

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8. Where did the Endurance crew take refuge? Why?

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