

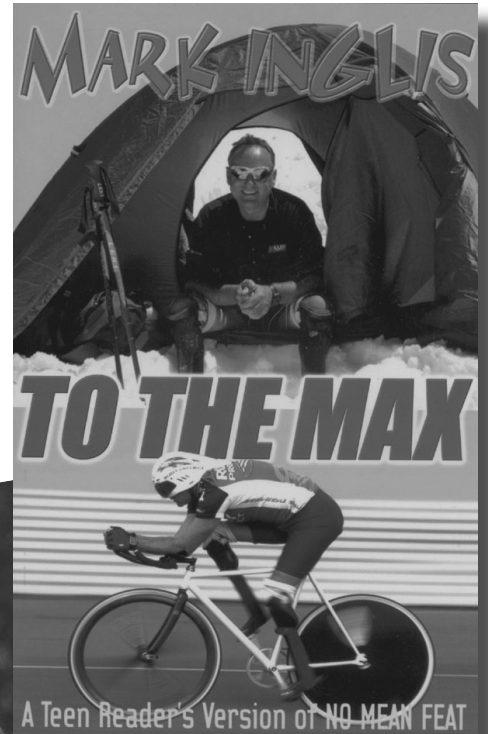
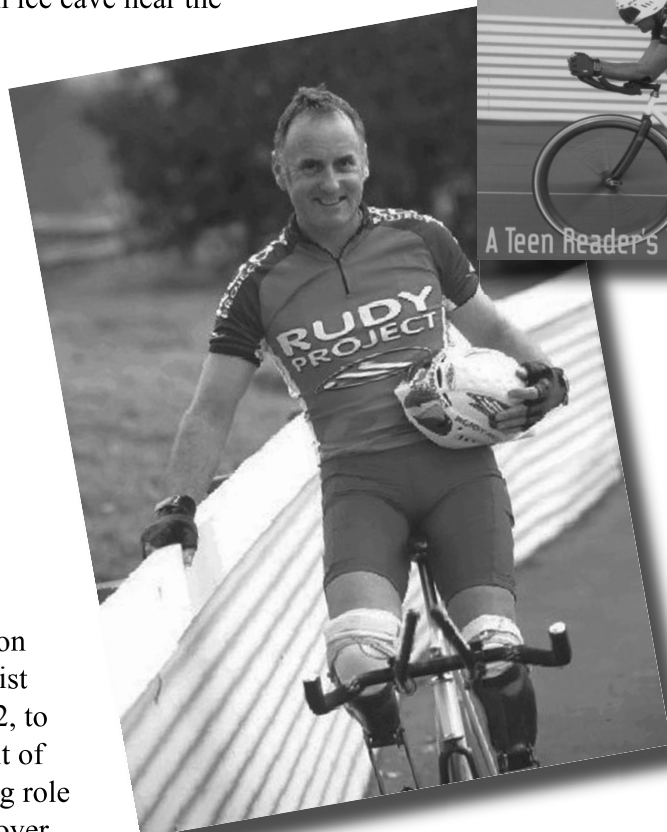
Teachers Resource Kit – To The Max *– by Mark Inglis*

To The Max is a teen readers' abridged version of the New Zealand bestseller *No Mean Feat*. Written with clarity and honesty, *To The Max* is a motivational, inspirational story of one man's courage and determination.

This is an inspiring story of remarkable courage and determination. For Mark Inglis, life is for living and obstacles are there to be overcome. Every new adventure brings with it new challenges and the opportunity to live life *To The Max*.

When Mark was 23 he was trapped in an ice cave near the summit of Mt Cook with fellow climber Phil Doole for 13 days. They survived through raging blizzards with very little food until they were found. By the time they were able to be lifted from the mountain both men had severe frostbite, and had their legs amputated below the knee while recovering in Christchurch's Burwood Hospital burns and spinal units.

Since then, Mark has set himself many targets, academic, professional and physical, and has succeeded in all areas. He won a silver medal cycling at the Sydney 2000 Paralympic Games, has won skiing medals, become a research scientist and made medal-winning wines. In 2002, to his great joy, he stepped onto the summit of Mt Cook again. Mark is an awe-inspiring role model and mentor for young people all over New Zealand.



**Including classroom activities for children,
Years 7 to 11, in the following areas:**

- *Reading**
- *Writing**
- *Visual Responses**
- *Personal Responses**
- *Heroes**
- *Mountains**
- *Disability**



To The Max is published by Random House New Zealand Ltd,
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Reader's Notes

Before you read

- * What do you know about Mark Inglis already?
- * Looking at the cover, what kind of person do you think he is?
- * What does the title mean?
- * Why do you think the adult version was called *No Mean Feat*?

Comprehension Questions

Chapter 1:

- * What do you think the chapter title means?
- * Why didn't Mark like team sports?
- * What were his passions as a child? What did his parents do to encourage him? (p.6/7)
- * What did Mark learn from working?
- * How would you describe the young Mark Inglis' personality?
- * What does 'very respectful of the mountain environment' mean? (p.9)
- * Mark chose to go light and take just enough supplies for survival. What did he leave behind? What consequences did that have? (p.14/15)
- * Why did they ignore the high winds? What does Mark mean by 'the confidence of youth'? (p.16)
- * What kind of person is Mark at this stage of the book?
- * Why was shelter a number-one priority? (p.18)
- * What was the only advantage of not eating much? (p.19)
- * What did Mark mean by his own Discovery Channel? (p.20)
- * Why are nights worse for fears? (p.22)

Chapter 2:

- * What feelings would they have opening a drop bag for the first time?
- * What do you think Bert had seen lying on the snow? (p.29)
- * What did the reporter do that was wrong? (p.30)

Chapter 3:

- * What are the short and long-term effects of frostbite?
- * What was the real shock? (p.39) How is Mark coping with everything at this point?

- * Why was the registrar's advice so important to Mark? (p.40) What does this tell you about Mark's personality?
- * What does 'waiting for a sentence' mean?
- * Why were 25-27th the blackest days? (p.45)
- * What are some of the side-effects of taking strong drugs?
- * Why are there mostly young males at the spinal unit?

Chapter 4:

- * What is a milestone? Where do you think the word came from originally? (p.51)
- * What is Mark's attitude towards children?
- * Why did he return to school?
- * 'Life for me was never quite good enough.' What does this tell you about Mark?
- * Why were the new legs so difficult?
- * What makes the ski accident story so funny? (p.62)
- * When Mark saw himself on video, it was a turning point. Why? (p.63)
- * What boosted his skiing confidence? (p.65)

Chapter 5:

- * How did they modify the legs? Why?
- * Why was Mark searched in airports? How? (p.71)
- * What advantage did he have in the road race? (p.72)
- * What is the training schedule for those in the Paralympics?
- * Who was selected for the team and why was it a difficult decision? (p.77)
- * What was the cause of the 'trouble' in the race? (p.78)
- * Why was the team event a challenge for Mark? (p.80)
- * What were Mark's feelings at winning silver?
- * Why did he think of Mt Cook again? (p.84-5, 86)

Chapter 6:

- * What were conditions like for the climb? (p.91)
- * What does 'bluffed' mean?
- * Why did Mark think he would fail? (p.94)
- * What did he learn from the failure? Why didn't he give up? (p.96, 97)
- * Why was the decision (to fly) controversial? (p.99)
- * What makes bivvying special?
- * What words best describe Mark's personality on page 104?
- * List the main difficulties of the final stages of the climb.

- * What does he mean by the 'top of the world next'? (p.108)

Chapter 7:

- * How do the mountains empower Mark?
- * What were Mark's future goals?
- * Visit Mark's website (www.markinglis.co.nz) and find the latest news about his climbing expeditions and goals.

Personal Responses

- * What feelings did you have as you read this book?
- * What are your passions/enthusiasms?
- * Read page 109. What boosts your confidence like this?
- * Mark said 'nothing can stop me now' after the climb. How did this make you feel?
- * 'No pain, no gain' is a saying used by sportspeople (p.53). Have you experienced this effect?
- * Mark was always trying new things, from wine-making to cycling. What new sport or activity would you like to try?
- * Why do you think Mark never gave up trying? In what ways does Mark's life inspire you?
- * Read other books by famous sportspeople such as Lance Armstrong.

Disability

- * What does the word 'disabled' mean to you?
- * What was Mark's attitude to being an amputee? (p.58)
- * How was Disabled Skiing different from Mark's expectations? (p.60)
- * It's easy just to focus on people's disabilities, and forget the person. What are Mark's views on this? (p.64)
- * Why didn't he tell the instructor that he was an amputee? (p.65)
- * Why did Mark call disabled people 'unique'? (p.80). Did the Paralympics change this view?
- * Why does he use the word 'ability' on page 86? Does Mark come across as a 'disabled' person? Why do words matter when describing disability?

Mountains

- * Find out facts about the Search and Rescue organisation.
- * Compare the description of Mt Cook (p.12) with the photos.
- * Write a timeline for the 13 days of events on the mountain (from page 19 onwards).
- * What are the essential supplies a mountain climber should take to stay alive and well in all conditions?
- * List the positive and negative things about climbing mountains. Why do you think people do it?
- * Research the first successful climbs of Mt Cook.
- * Find photos of the climbing gear listed on page 92.
- * Use the internet or public library to find the newspaper reports from November 1982. Are the reports of Mark's experience accurate or exaggerated?

Visual Responses

- * Read Mark's dream image on page 26. Paint or draw the dreamscape.
- * Sketch the geographical features in the box on page 8. Find photos of each.
- * Mark calls his Alped legs the Terminator legs (page 87). Find a picture of the *Terminator* movie robot and sketch the legs and feet.
- * Design your own cover for the book.
- * *To The Max* would make an exciting movie. Design a poster for a film version, drama or documentary.
- * Watch the movie *Touching The Void*. What similarities are there with Mark's experiences?

Heroes

- * Write a brief biography of one of New Zealand's well-known mountaineers or sportspeople.
- * On page 38 Mark reads a book about Douglas Bader. Find out about this war hero. Read the exciting book about him, *Reach For The Sky*, or watch the movie version. Why would Mark find Bader's story inspiring?
- * Find out about other famous people who had disabilities. For example, Lance Armstrong, Christopher Reeve, Helen Keller. What did they achieve in their lives?
- * Mark's roadshow tours New Zealand talking about local heroes John Britten, Bill Hamilton and Rob Hamill (p.111). Research these people and find out what they achieved.
- * Who are your real-life heroes? Who are the people (famous or not) who inspire you or encourage you in life? Write a short description of one of them.
- * Write your own definition of the word 'hero'.

Writing

- * Read pages 28-32 and write a newspaper item describing events from the point of view of a reporter. Make sure your account is fair and does not make uninformed guesses. (Remember the reporter's mistakes on page 30.)
- * Imagine you have a physical disability. Write a story about going to school and handling your disability.
- * Write a letter to Mark Inglis saying how you felt about his book or how it has helped you.
- * Write a critical review of the book. Comment on the quality of the writing, layout and information.
- * Write a script for a play about two people trapped in the wilderness. For example, climbers on a mountain, trampers in the bush, people at sea. Make sure the words reflect the worries and hopes of the characters.

Other Activities

- * Estimate the size of Middle Peak Hotel and construct it from cardboard boxes. Set up camp inside.
- * Collect food supplies listed on page 18. Divide into rations for seven days.
- * Try Mark's meat experiment on page 35. (For those with a strong stomach).
- * Mark describes the steep cycling course on page 81. Find a similar slope. Is it possible to stand on it?
- * Research the origins of mountain biking and find a bike to sketch. Present the information on a mini-poster.

