

## Visual Impairment: Touch the Top of the World (Non-Fiction)

Est. Time: 2 Weeks Reading/45 Minutes Class

### Objective

Gain a better understanding of blindness and society's expectations for individuals who are blind.

### Synopsis

Mountain climber Erik Weihenmayer, who is blind, chronicles his journey towards fulfilling every mountain climber's dream: reaching the summits of the world's seven highest mountains.

### Activity

Read the following book and be prepared to discuss the questions below in class.

Title: *Touch the Top of the World: A Blind Man's Journey to Climb Farther than the Eye Can See* (2001)

Author: Erik Weihenmayer

Publisher: Penguin Group • New York

#### For Your Information

To learn more about visual impairments, visit:

- [Visual Impairment, Including Blindness](#) (Center for Parent Information and Resources)
- [American Foundation for the Blind](#) (AFB)

### Questions/Discussion Topics

1. How did Erik lose his sight? How old was he?
2. How did he get interested in mountain climbing?
3. What was Erik's vocation before he started climbing full time?
4. What lesson did Erik learn from Guru?
5. How did Erik incorporate the lesson he learned from Guru in his classroom?
6. In his memoir, Erik emphasizes society's low expectations for those with disabilities. Briefly describe some of the situations in Erik's life that seem to reflect this.
7. Do you think Erik would have continued climbing if he had lost his sight after becoming a mountain climber? Why or why not?
8. If you had been the guide for these climbs, would you have wanted Erik along? Why or why not?