



That's Interesting!



A worksheet for adults to practise reading, writing, spelling and numbers

Tom Crean, Irish explorer



Tom Crean

Image source: Frank Hurley, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Tom Crean: The quiet pub owner who lived in Annascaul in Kerry and who never spoke about his life as an explorer and the three expeditions he made to reach the South Pole.

Tom Crean from Annascaul in County Kerry is regarded as the greatest Irish explorer of all time. Born in 1877, he was one of a family of 11 children. His parents were farmers and young Tom helped out on the family farm. It is said that after an argument with his father, he ran away from home and soon after joined the British Royal Navy. He was only 1□ years old at the time.

In the British navy he trained as a seaman and sailed to many parts of the world on the huge navy ships.

At this time, many explorers from across the world were in a race to become the first to reach the South Pole. The South Pole is at the very southern tip of the earth in the continent of Antarctica and is a vast area of ice surrounded by freezing seas. It is the most dangerous journey for any human to attempt and very many people died while trying.

Expedition to the South Pole

In 1901 Crean volunteered to be part of an expedition to the South Pole which was led by the famous explorer Captain Robert Scott on board the ship the Discovery. When they got to within 600 miles of the South Pole, the ship got stuck in ice. The crew survived on the ship for two years before they managed to free the ship and return to land.



Crean prepares for the trek to the South Pole with Captain Scott in 1911

Image source: Le Tour du monde, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

In November 1911, Scott asked Crean to join him once again in another attempt to reach the South Pole, this time on the ship the Terra Nova. Two months later, when they were within 200 km of the South Pole, Scott decided that only 5 of the crew could make the final journey. Tom Crean was not chosen and, bitterly disappointed, he and two others made the tough journey back to base camp.

On the journey back, with food running low, they decided to make a sledge out of ropes. They then used this sledge to slide down an ice covered mountain of more than 2000 feet (600 metres) with nothing to stop their fall or control the speed.

It was nothing short of a miracle that they managed to land safely. This mountain slope has since been named Mount Crean.

One of the men then became seriously ill and with food running out and still several days left before they would reach their base, Crean decided to continue the journey on his own to get help. With just a piece of chocolate and 3 biscuits, without a tent or any other equipment, he walked the 56 km ice covered mountain for 18 hours until he reached base camp and help was then sent to rescue the others.

When Captain Scott and his crew failed to return to base camp, Crean joined a team to search for them. Sadly, they found them all dead. Although they had reached the South Pole, they were caught in a snow storm on their return and they all died from frostbite. They buried their bodies in the snow. On his return to England, Tom Crean was awarded the Albert Medal which is the highest award that can be given for bravery

His final expedition to the South Pole was in 1914 with the explorer Ernest Shackleton on the ship the Endurance. A few months into the journey the ship got stuck in frozen ice and the crew were stuck there for 10 months. With no sign of the ice melting, they used the lifeboats to sail to an island. Most of the crew remained there while Crean led a small group of men on the dangerous voyage to the base camp in South Georgia where they got help to rescue the rest of the team.

Last year, the remains of the ship, The Endurance, were located in the deep ocean around the South Pole where it had sunk more than 100 years ago.



The South Pole Inn Annascaul

Image source: Peter Kersten, [CC BY-SA 4.0](#), via Wikimedia Commons

On returning to England, Crean fought in World War 1 and after the war he retired from the navy and returned to his native Kerry. He later married and had two daughters. He and his wife ran a pub in Annascaul in Kerry which he named The South Pole Inn. This pub is still there today.

Apart from the name of his pub, local people say that Crean was a quiet man who never spoke about his great adventures and in fact most people who knew him or his family had no idea of the life he had lived. Tom Crean passed away in 1938 at the age of 61.

Words that have silent letters



Words that have a **silent L**

walk	folk	would	half	calm
talk	yolk	could	calf	palm
chalk	salmon	should		psalm

Words that have a **silent b**

numb	comb	lamb	doubt
crumb	bomb	limb	debt
thumb	womb	climb	
plumber	tomb		

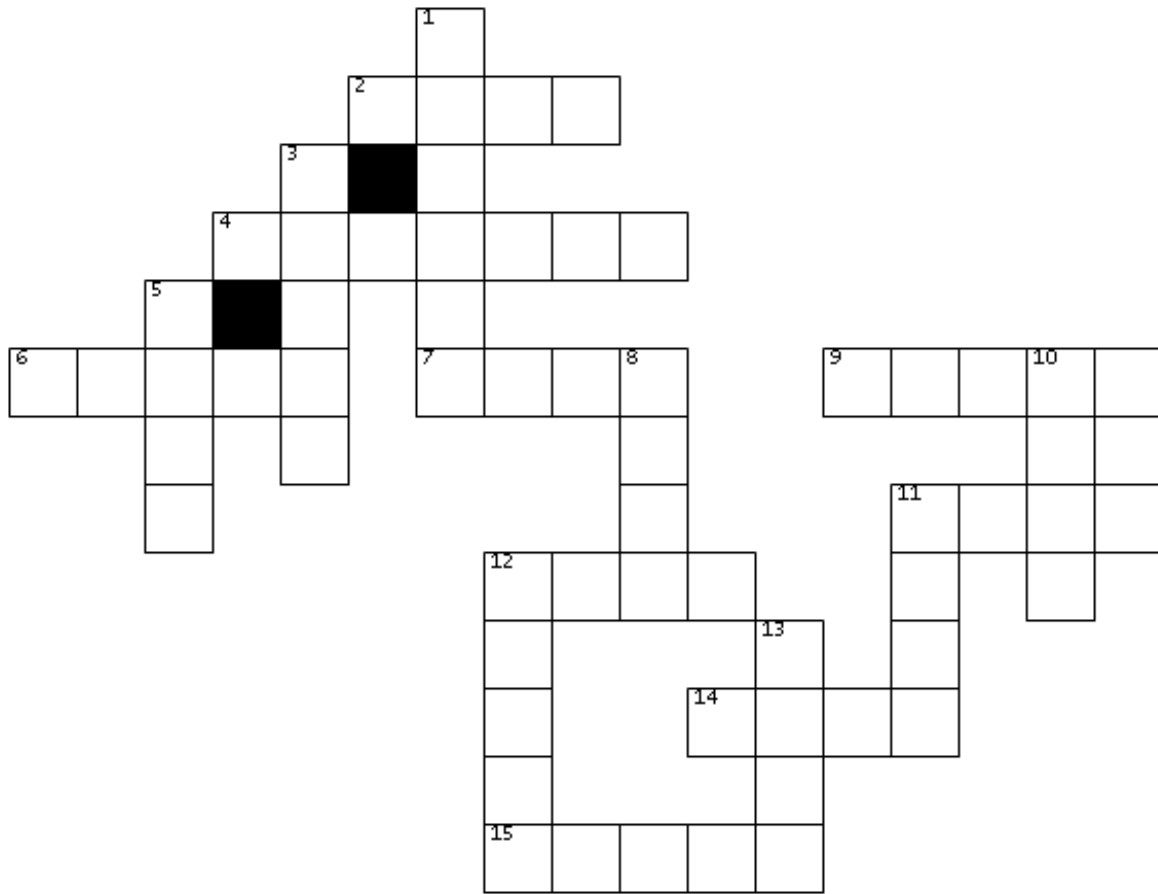
Fill in the blanks with words from the lists above:

1. I called the _____ to fix my broken tap.
2. A child sometimes likes to suck their _____.
3. I go for a 5km _____ every morning with my friend.
4. I _____ really like go for a run but I feel lazy today.
5. Every year many thousands of people _____ Croagh Patrick
6. A baby grows in the mother's _____.
7. It was so cold my hands went _____.
8. The _____ of the egg is yellow.
9. I need to _____ my hair.
10. A sheep and her _____ are in the field.
11. A cow and her _____ are in the meadow.
12. There is no _____ about it, I know what I saw.

Crossword



The answers are all words taken from the lists of **silent L** and **silent b** words



Across

2. Middle of your hand (4)
4. This person will fix your broken tap (7)
6. A reading from the bible (5)
7. When you have no feeling (4)
9. A white material used to write on a blackboard (5)
11. A baby grows in this for 9 months (4)
12. When you owe money, you are in _____ (4)
14. Can you please _____ to her about it (4)
15. I hit my _____ with the hammer by accident (5)

Down

1. Beef or _____, a popular dinner choice (6)
3. To go up a ladder (5)
5. Try to stay _____ in a crisis (4)
8. An explosion (4)
10. Another name for an arm or a leg (4)
11. I like to go for a long _____ every day (4)
12. When you are not sure, you have this (5)
13. A young sheep (4)

