

It's official: Mount Everest just got a little bit taller

By Washington Post, adapted by Newsela staff on 01.08.21

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Image 1. A view of Mount Everest and the Himalayan mountain range. Nepal and China announced a new official height measurement for Mount Everest. Photo: Witchaphon Saengaram/ Getty Images Photo: Witchaphon Saengaram/ Getty Images

Mount Everest is the world's tallest mountain. It is in China and Nepal. Now, it is taller than people thought before.

The countries measured the mountain recently. Everest is 8,848.86 meters high. This is the same as 29,031.69 feet. It is about 3 feet higher than what they thought it was before.

This is the most accurate measurement ever, said Susheel Dangol. He is Nepal's head of the project. "It was a huge responsibility on our part. It is a moment of great pride for us."

Everest Gets Taller Every Year

Geologists study the processes and material, such as rocks, that shape a planet. They say that Everest's height changes. One reason is because of moving tectonic plates. These huge slabs of rock make up Earth's outer layer. Some are thousands of kilometers, or miles, across. Tectonic

plates push the mountain slightly higher each year. Earthquakes also can change height. They make it sink.

Measuring The Mountain

Nepal's team measured Everest in two ways. The first way used trigonometry. It is the mathematical study of triangles.

The other way used new technology. It included a global network of satellites. And a model. A model is a tool that represents things that can or could take place in the real world.

Measuring the mountain's height was not easy. One surveyor got frostbite. He lost the tip of a toe. His team also almost ran out of air on the way down. They had to carry heavy tools.

It Was Teamwork

Nepal wanted to measure the mountain. The country had never measured it before. They spent \$1.3 million to do so.

Nepal and China worked together on the job. China combined new data with information from older surveys. The calculations by both countries were quite similar. Together, they reached a single figure. Scientists say it is very accurate.

Nepal and China worked together. They agreed on one number for Everest's height. It could not be more accurate, scientists say.

Quiz

1 What is the section "Measuring The Mountain" MAINLY about?

- (A) why people need air on Mount Everest
- (B) how Mount Everest is like a triangle
- (C) what was used to measure Mount Everest
- (D) how much higher Mount Everest is now

2 Read the paragraph below from the section "Measuring The Mountain."

Measuring the mountain's height was not easy. One surveyor got frostbite. He lost the tip of a toe. His team also almost ran out of air on the way down. They had to carry heavy tools.

What is the focus of this paragraph?

- (A) the dangers of measuring Mount Everest
- (B) the cost of measuring Mount Everest
- (C) the ways in which people measured Mount Everest
- (D) the reason why people measured Mount Everest

3 Read the paragraph below from the section "Everest Gets Taller Every Year."

Geologists study the processes and material, such as rocks, that shape a planet. They say that Everest's height changes. One reason is because of moving tectonic plates. These huge slabs of rock make up Earth's outer layer. Some are thousands of kilometers, or miles, across. Tectonic plates push the mountain slightly higher each year. Earthquakes also can change height. They make it sink.

What does the author want to explain in this paragraph?

- (A) where Mount Everest is located
- (B) how Mount Everest's height changes
- (C) who first measured Mount Everest
- (D) why Mount Everest is important to Nepal

4 What question does the author want to answer in this article?

- (A) When was Mount Everest first measured?
- (B) Who created models of Mount Everest?
- (C) How do earthquakes make Mount Everest sink?
- (D) How did Nepal and China measure Mount Everest?