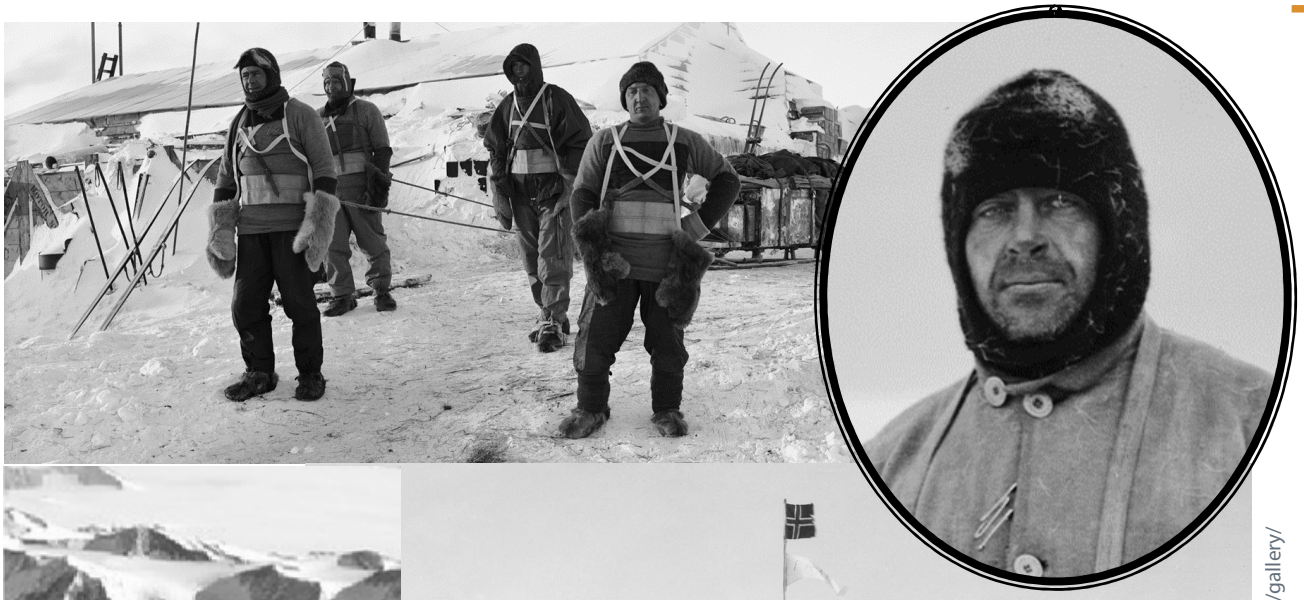
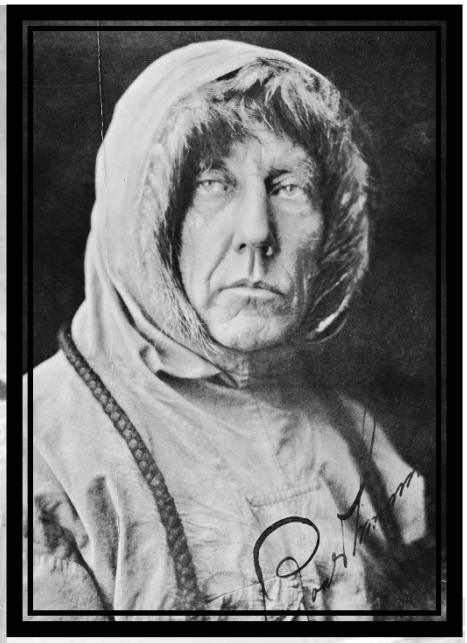
READING CLOSELY GRADE 7 UNIT TEXTS

AUTHOR	DATE	PUBLISHER	L	NOTES
Text #1: Robert Falcon Scott and Roald Amundsen (Photo Collages)				
Various	NA	Scott Polar Research Inst., University of Cambridge - National Library of Norway - Norwegian Polar Institute	NA	Two collages combine pictures of the British and the Norwegian expeditions, to support examining and comparing visual details.
Text #2: *The Last Expedition*, Ch. V (Explorers Journal)				
Robert Falcon Scott	1913	Smith Elder	1160L	Journal entry from 2/2/1911 presents Scott's almost poetic "impressions" early in his trip to the South Pole.
Text #3: *Roald Amundsen South Pole* (Video)				
Viking River Cruises	NA	Viking River Cruises	NA	Combines images, maps, text and narration, to present a historical narrative about Amundsen and the Great Race to the South Pole.
Text #4: *Scott's Hut & the Explorer's Heritage of Antarctica* (Website)				
UNESCO World Wonders Project	NA	Google Cultural Institute	NA	Website allows students to do a virtual tour of Scott's Antarctic hut and its surrounding landscape, and links to other resources.
Text #5: *To Build a Fire* (Short Story)				
Jack London	1908	The Century Magazine	920L	Excerpt from the famous short story describes a man's desperate attempts to build a saving fire after plunging into frigid water.
Text #6: *The North Pole*, Ch. XXI (Historical Narrative)				
Robert Peary	1910	Frederick A. Stokes	1380L	Narrative from the first man to reach the North Pole describes the dangers and challenges of Arctic exploration.
Text #7: *The South Pole*, Ch. XII (Historical Narrative)				
Roald Amundsen	1912	John Murray	1070L	Narrative recounts the days leading up to Amundsen's triumphant arrival at the Pole on 12/14/1911 – and winning the Great Race.
Text #8: *Scott's Last Expedition*, Ch. XVIII (Explorer's Journal)				
Robert Falcon Scott	1913	Smith Elder	830L	Journal entries from January 1912 communicate disappointment about arriving at the Pole – behind Amundsen.
Text #9: *Scott's Last Expedition*, Ch. XX (Explorer's Journal)				
Robert Falcon Scott	1913	Smith Elder	860L	Final journal entries from March 1912 are written in short sentences, showing Scott's weakness and desperation.
Extended Reading: *Letters*, Ch. XX (Letters)				
Robert Falcon Scott	1913	Smith Elder	1430L	Letters Scott composed in his final days provide additional evidence of his state of mind.
Extended Reading: *Voyages of Captain Scott*, Ch. IX (Secondary Historical Narrative)				
Charles Thurley	2004	Kessinger Publishing	1160L	Turley's account illustrates contrast between primary and secondary narratives. this excerpt matches the events from Text #8.
Extended Reading: *A Timeline of the Exploration of Antarctica* (Website)				
NA	NA	Cool Antarctica	NA	Cool Antarctica present many educational resources about Antarctica past and present, including this timeline of exploration.
Extended Reading: *British Antarctic Expedition 1910-13 Gallery* (Website)				
Scott Polar Research Institute	NA	University of Cambridge	NA	Archives over 2000 photos from the Antarctic expeditions of Scott and Ernest Shackleton.

TEXT #1



Robert Falcon Scott



Roald Amundsen

TEXT #2

The Last Expedition

Robert Falcon Scott , 1911

Published by Smith Elder in 1913

Excerpt: Ch. V

DEPOT LAYING TO ONE TON CAMP

http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1481376&pageno=90

Thursday, February 2, Camp 4

So we are resting in our tents, waiting to start to-night...

Last night the temperature fell to -6° after the wind dropped - today it is warm and calm.

Impressions

The **seductive** folds of the sleeping-bag.

The hiss of the **primus** and the fragrant steam of the cooker issuing from the tent ventilator.

The small green tent and the great white road.

The whine of a dog and the neigh of our **steeds**.

The driving cloud of powdered snow.

The crunch of footsteps which break the surface crust.

The wind blown **furrows**.

seductive	**primus**	**steeds**
tempting behavior	a portable cooking stove that uses paraffin as fuel	high spirited horses
furrows		
narrow indents made in the ground		

The blue arch beneath the smoky cloud.

The crisp ring of the ponies' hoofs and the swish of the following **sledge**.

The droning conversation of the march as driver encourages or **chides** his horse.

The patter of dog pads.

The gentle flutter of our canvas shelter.

Its deep booming sound under the full force of a blizzard.

The drift snow like finest flour penetrating every hole and corner—flickering up beneath one's head covering, pricking sharply as a sand blast.

The sun with blurred image peeping shyly through the wreathing drift giving pale shadowless light.

The eternal silence of the great white desert. Cloudy columns of snow drift advancing from the south, pale yellow **wraiths**, heralding the coming storm, blotting out one by one the sharp-cut lines of the land.

The blizzard, Nature's protest—the **crevasse,** Nature's pitfall—that grim trap for the **unwary**—no hunter could conceal his snare so perfectly—the light rippled snow bridge gives no hint or sign of the hidden danger, its position unguessable till man or beast is floundering, clawing and struggling for foothold on the brink.

The vast silence broken only by the mellow sounds of the marching column.

sledge	**chides**	**wraiths**
a sled that can be pulled by animals to carry food and possessions above snow	scolds	something thin and pale, such as a stream of smoke
crevasse	**unwary**	
a deep crack or hole especially in the ice of a glacier	not careful to look out for potential danger or harm	

TEXT #3

Roald Amundsen South Pole
Viking River Cruises

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kW5p7ANwAU4

TEXT #4

Scott's Hut and the Explorers' Heritage of Antarctica
UNESCO World Wonders Project
Google Cultural Institute

http://www.google.com/intl/en/culturalinstitute/worldwonders/scotts-hut/

TEXT #5

To Build a Fire

Jack London

Published by The Century Magazine in 1908

http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2429/2429-0.txt

(Excerpt)

When the man had finished, he filled his pipe and took his comfortable time over a P1
smoke. Then he pulled on his mittens, settled the ear-flaps of his cap firmly about his ears, and took the creek trail up the left fork. The dog was disappointed and yearned back toward the fire. This man did not know cold. Possibly all the generations of his ancestry had been ignorant of cold, of real cold, of cold one hundred and seven degrees below freezing-point. But the dog knew; all its ancestry knew, and it had inherited the knowledge. And it knew that it was not good to walk abroad in such fearful cold. It was the time to lie snug in a hole in the snow and wait for a curtain of cloud to be drawn across the face of outer space **whence** this cold came. On the other hand, there was keen **intimacy** between the dog and the man. The one was the **toil-slave** of the other, and the only caresses it had ever received were the caresses of the whip- lash and of harsh and **menacing** throat-sounds that threatened the whip-lash. So the dog made no effort to communicate its **apprehension** to the man. It was not concerned in the welfare of the man; it was for its own sake that it **yearned** back toward the fire. But the man whistled, and spoke to it with the sound of whip-lashes, and the dog swung in at the man's heels

whence	**imtimacy**	**toil-slave**
from what place	a close relationship, usually affectionate and loving	hard and continuous work done by a person or animal controlled by a master
menacing	**apprehension**	**yearned**
something that threatens to cause evil	suspicion or caution of potential trouble	desire for something that is or appears unattainable

and followed after.

The man took a chew of tobacco and proceeded to start a new **amber** beard. Also, his P2
moist breath quickly powdered with white his moustache, eyebrows, and lashes. There did not seem to be so many springs on the left fork of the Henderson, and for half an hour the
20 man saw no signs of any. And then it happened. At a place where there were no signs, where the soft, unbroken snow seemed to advertise solidity beneath, the man broke through. It was not deep. He wetted himself half-way to the knees before he **floundered** out to the firm crust.

He was angry, and cursed his luck aloud. He had hoped to get into camp with the P3
25 boys at six o'clock, and this would delay him an hour, for he would have to build a fire and dry out his foot-gear. This was **imperative** at that low temperature--he knew that much; and he turned aside to the bank, which he climbed. On top, tangled in the underbrush about the trunks of several small spruce trees, was a high-water deposit of dry firewood--sticks and twigs principally, but also larger portions of seasoned branches and fine, dry,
30 last-year's grasses. He threw down several large pieces on top of the snow. This served for a foundation and prevented the young flame from drowning itself in the snow it otherwise would melt. The flame he got by touching a match to a small shred of birch-bark that he took from his pocket. This burned even more readily than paper. Placing it on the foundation, he fed the young flame with wisps of dry grass and with the tiniest dry twigs.

35 He worked slowly and carefully, keenly aware of his danger. Gradually, as the flame P4
grew stronger, he increased the size of the twigs with which he fed it. He squatted in the snow, pulling the twigs out from their entanglement in the brush and feeding directly to

amber	floundered	imperative
yellowish-brown color	struggled in a clumsy manner	absolutely necessary or required

the flame. He knew there must be no failure. When it is seventy- five below zero, a man must not fail in his first attempt to build a fire--that is, if his feet are wet. If his feet are dry, and he fails, he can run along the trail for half a mile and restore his circulation. But the circulation of wet and freezing feet cannot be restored by running when it is seventy-five below. No matter how fast he runs, the wet feet will freeze the harder.

All this the man knew. The old-timer on Sulphur Creek had told him about it the previous fall, and now he was appreciating the advice. Already all sensation had gone out of his feet. To build the fire he had been forced to remove his mittens, and the fingers had quickly gone numb. His pace of four miles an hour had kept his heart pumping blood to the surface of his body and to all the extremities. But the instant he stopped, the action of the pump eased down. The cold of space smote the unprotected tip of the planet, and he, being on that unprotected tip, received the full force of the blow. The blood of his body **recoiled** before it. The blood was alive, like the dog, and like the dog it wanted to hide away and cover itself up from the fearful cold. So long as he walked four miles an hour, he pumped that blood, willy-nilly, to the surface; but now it **ebbed** away and sank down into the **recesses** of his body. The **extremities** were the first to feel its absence. His wet feet froze the faster, and his exposed fingers numbed the faster, though they had not yet begun to freeze. Nose and cheeks were already freezing, while the skin of all his body chilled as it lost its blood.

P5

But he was safe. Toes and nose and cheeks would be only touched by the frost, for the fire was beginning to burn with strength. He was feeding it with twigs the size of his finger. In another minute he would be able to feed it with branches the size of his wrist, and then he could remove his wet foot-gear, and, while it dried, he could keep his naked

P6

recoiled	ebbed	reccesses
to draw back as from alarm or disgust	flowing backward or away	secluded or inner areas or parts
extremities		
the end part of a limb, as a hand or foot		

feet warm by the fire, rubbing them at first, of course, with snow. The fire was a success. He was safe. He remembered the advice of the old-timer on Sulphur Creek, and smiled. The old-timer had been very serious in laying down the law that no man must travel alone in the Klondike after fifty below. Well, here he was; he had had the accident; he was alone; and he had saved himself. Those old-timers were rather womanish, some of them, he thought. All a man had to do was to keep his head, and he was all right. Any man who was a man could travel alone. But it was surprising, the **rapidity** with which his cheeks and nose were freezing. And he had not thought his fingers could go lifeless in so short a time. Lifeless they were, for he could scarcely make them move together to grip a twig, and they seemed remote from his body and from him. When he touched a twig, he had to look and see whether or not he had hold of it. The wires were pretty well down between him and his finger-ends.

P7

All of which counted for little. There was the fire, snapping and crackling and promising life with every dancing flame. He started to untie his moccasins. They were coated with ice; the thick German socks were like sheaths of iron half-way to the knees; and the mocassin strings were like rods of steel all twisted and knotted as by some **conflagration**. For a moment he tugged with his numbed fingers, then, realizing the folly of it, he drew his **sheath**-knife.

P8

But before he could cut the strings, it happened. It was his own fault or, rather, his mistake. He should not have built the fire under the spruce tree. He should have built it in the open. But it had been easier to pull the twigs from the brush and drop them directly on the fire. Now the tree under which he had done this carried a weight of snow on its boughs. No wind had blown for weeks, and each bough was fully **freighted**. Each time he

rapidity	**conflagration**	**sheath**
swiftness; speed	a large destructive fire	close-fitting covering or case
freighted		
loaded; burdened		

had pulled a twig he had communicated a slight agitation to the tree--an **imperceptible** agitation, so far as he was concerned, but an agitation sufficient to bring about the disaster. High up in the tree one bough capsized its load of snow. This fell on the boughs beneath, **capsizing** them. This process continued, spreading out and involving the whole tree. It grew like an avalanche, and it descended without warning upon the man and the fire, and the fire was blotted out! Where it had burned was a mantle of fresh and disordered snow.

The man was shocked. It was as though he had just heard his own sentence of death. **P9** For a moment he sat and stared at the spot where the fire had been. Then he grew very calm.

imperceptible	**capsizing**	
hidden, undetectable	to overturn or tip over accidentally	

TEXT #6

The North Pole

Robert E Peary

Published by Frederick A. Stokes in 1910

http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/18975/pg18975.txt

Excerpt: Ch. XX1
ARCTIC ICE SLEDGING AS IT REALLY IS

But the pressure ridges above described are not the worst feature of the arctic ice. **P1**
Far more troublesome and dangerous are the "leads" (the whalers' term for lanes of open water), which are caused by the movement of the ice under the pressure of the wind and tides. These are the ever-present nightmare of the traveler over the frozen surface of the polar ocean—on the upward journey for fear that they may prevent further advance; on the return journey for fear they may cut him off from the land and life, leaving him to wander about and starve to death on the northern side. Their occurrence or non-occurrence is a thing impossible to **prophesy** or calculate. They open without warning immediately ahead of the traveler, following no apparent rule or law of action. They are the unknown quantity of the polar equation.

Sometimes these leads are mere cracks running through old **floes** in nearly a straight **P2**
line. Sometimes they are zigzag lanes of water just wide enough to be impossible to cross. Sometimes they are rivers of open water from half a mile to two miles in width, stretching east and west farther than the eye can see.

prophesy	**floes**	
to predict	sheets of floating ice, mainly on the surface of the sea	

There are various ways of crossing the leads. One can go to the right or the left, with the idea of finding some place where the opposite edges of the ice are near enough together so that our long sledges can be bridged across. Or, if there are **indications** that the lead is closing, the traveler can wait until the ice comes quite together. If it is very cold, one may wait until the ice has formed thick enough to bear the loaded sledges going at full speed. Or, one may search for a cake of ice, or hack out a cake with pickaxes, which can be used as a ferry-boat on which to transport the sledges and teams across. P3

But all these means go for **naught** when the "big lead," which marks the edge of the continental shelf where it dips down into the Arctic Ocean, is in one of its tantrums, opening just wide enough to keep a continual zone of open water or impracticable young ice in the center, as occurred on our upward journey of 1906 and the never-to-be-forgotten return journey of that expedition, when this lead nearly cut us off forever from life itself. P4

A lead might have opened right through our camp, or through one of the snow igloos, when we were sleeping on the surface of the polar sea. Only—it didn't. P5

Should the ice open across the bed platform of an igloo, and **precipitate** its inhabitants into the icy water below, they would not readily drown, because of the **buoyancy** of the air inside their fur clothing. A man dropping into the water in this way might be able to scramble onto the ice and save himself; but with the thermometer at 50° below zero it would not be a pleasant **contingency**. P6

indications	**naught**	**precipitate**
hints	nothing, zero	to plunge especially violently or abruptly
buoyancy	**contigency**	
airiness	predicament	

This is the reason why I have never used a sleeping-bag when out on the polar ice. I prefer to have my legs and arms free, and to be ready for any emergency at a moment's notice. I never go to sleep when out on the sea ice without my mittens on, and if I pull my arms inside my sleeves I pull my mittens in too, so as to be ready for instant action. What chance would a man in a sleeping-bag have, should he suddenly wake to find himself in the water? P7

The difficulties and hardships of a journey to the North Pole are too complex to be summed up in a paragraph. But, briefly stated, the worst of them are: the ragged and mountainous ice over which the traveler must journey with his heavily loaded sledges; the often terrific wind, having the impact of a wall of water, which he must march against at times; the open leads already described, which he must cross and recross, somehow; the intense cold, sometimes as low as 60° below zero, through which he must—by fur clothing and constant activity—keep his flesh from freezing; the difficulty of dragging out and back over the ragged and "lead" interrupted trail enough **pemmican**, biscuit, tea, condensed milk, and liquid fuel to keep sufficient strength in his body for traveling. It was so cold much of the time on this last journey that the brandy was frozen solid, the petroleum was white and **viscid**, and the dogs could hardly be seen for the steam of their breath. The minor discomfort of building every night our narrow and uncomfortable snow houses, and the cold bed platform of that igloo on which we must snatch such hours of rest as the **exigencies** of our desperate **enterprise** permitted us, seem hardly worth mentioning in comparison with the difficulties of the main proposition itself. P8

pemmican	**viscid**	**exigencies**
dried meat loaf pounded into a powder, mixed with hot fat and dried fruits or berries	covered by a sticky substance	the need or requirement involved in a circumstance
enterprise		
a difficult or important project that is due to be undertaken		

P9

At times one may be obliged to march all day long facing a blinding snowstorm with the bitter wind searching every opening in the clothing. Those among my readers who have ever been obliged to walk for even an hour against a blizzard, with the temperature ten or twenty degrees *above* zero, probably have keen memories of the experience. Probably they also remember how welcome was the warm fireside of home at the end of their journey. But let them imagine tramping through such a storm all day long, over jagged and uneven ice, with the temperature between fifteen and thirty degrees *below* zero, and no shelter to look forward to at the end of the day's march excepting a narrow and cold snow house which they would themselves be **obliged** to build in that very storm before they could eat or rest.

obliged		
to make an action or request necessary		

TEXT #7

The South Pole

Roald Amundsen,1910-1912

Published by John Murray, London, in 1912

http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/3414/pg3414.txt

Excerpt: Chapter XII
AT THE POLE

The weather did not continue fine for long. Next day (December 5) there was a gale P1
from the north, and once more the whole plain was a mass of drifting snow. In addition to this there was thick falling snow, which blinded us and made things worse, but a feeling of security had come over us and helped us to advance rapidly and without hesitation, although we could see nothing. That day we encountered new surface conditions -- big, hard snow-waves (sastrugi). These were anything but pleasant to work among, especially when one could not see them. It was of no use for us "**forerunners**" to think of going in advance under these circumstances, as it was impossible to keep on one's feet. Three or four paces was often the most we managed to do before falling down. The sastrugi were very high, and often abrupt; if one came on them unexpectedly, one required to be more than an acrobat to keep on one's feet. The plan we found to work best in these conditions was to let Hanssen's dogs go first; this was an unpleasant job for Hanssen, and for his dogs too, but it succeeded, and succeeded well. An upset here and there was, of course, unavoidable, but with a little patience the sledge was always righted again. The drivers had as much as they could do to support their sledges among these sastrugi, but while supporting the sledges, they had at the same time a support for themselves. It was worse

forerunners		
a person who goes ahead or is sent in advance		

for us who had no sledges, but by keeping in the **wake** of them we could see where the irregularities lay, and thus get over them. Hanssen deserves a special word of praise for his driving on this surface in such weather. It is a difficult matter to drive Eskimo dogs forward when they cannot see; but Hanssen managed it well, both getting the dogs on and steering his course by compass…

On the morning of December 14 the weather was of the finest, just as if it had been made for arriving at the Pole. I am not quite sure, but I believe we **dispatched** our breakfast rather more quickly than usual and were out of the tent sooner, though I must admit that we always accomplished this with all reasonable **haste**. We went in the usual order -- the forerunner, Hanssen, Wisting, Bjaaland, and the **reserve** forerunner. By noon we had reached 89° 53' by dead **reckoning**, and made ready to take the rest in one stage. At 10 a.m. a light breeze had sprung up from the south-east, and it had clouded over, so that we got no noon altitude; but the clouds were not thick, and from time to time we had a glimpse of the sun through them. The going on that day was rather different from what it had been; sometimes the ski went over it well, but at others it was pretty bad. We advanced that day in the same mechanical way as before; not much was said, but eyes were used all the more. Hanssen's neck grew twice as long as before in his **endeavour** to see a few inches farther. I had asked him before we started to spy out ahead for all he was worth, and he did so with a **vengeance**. But, however keenly he stared, he could not **descry** anything but the endless flat plain ahead of us. The dogs had dropped their scenting, and appeared to have lost their interest in the regions about the earth's axis.

P2

wake	**dispatched**	**haste**
the path or course left by something that has passed or gone before	a method of a speedy delivery	quick action
reserve	**reckoning**	**endeavour**
to keep back or save for future use	computation; calculation	a strenuous effort or attempt to do something difficult
vengeance	**descry**	
great force	to see something that is unclear by looking closely	

At three in the afternoon a **simultaneous** "Halt!" rang out from the drivers. They had carefully examined their sledge-meters, and they all showed the full distance -- our Pole by reckoning. The goal was reached, the journey ended. I cannot say -- though I know it would sound much more effective -- that the object of my life was attained. That would be romancing rather too bare-facedly. I had better be honest and admit straight out that I have never known any man to be placed in such a **diametrically** opposite position to the goal of his desires as I was at that moment. The regions around the North Pole -- well, yes, the North Pole itself -- had attracted me from childhood, and here I was at the South Pole. Can anything more topsy-turvy be imagined? P3

We reckoned now that we were at the Pole. Of course, every one of us knew that we were not standing on the absolute spot; it would be an impossibility with the time and the instruments at our disposal to **ascertain** that exact spot. But we were so near it that the few miles which possibly separated us from it could not be of the slightest importance. It was our intention to make a circle round this camp, with a radius of twelve and a half miles (20 kilometres), and to be satisfied with that. After we had halted we collected and congratulated each other. We had good grounds for mutual respect in what had been achieved, and I think that was just the feeling that was expressed in the firm and powerful grasps of the fist that were exchanged. P4

After this we proceeded to the greatest and most solemn act of the whole journey -- the planting of our flag. Pride and affection shone in the five pairs of eyes that gazed upon the flag, as it unfurled itself with a sharp crack, and waved over the Pole. I had determined that the act of planting it -- the historic event -- should be equally divided P5

simultaneous	diametrically	ascertain
occurring at the same time	completely opposed; opposite	to make certain

among us all. It was not for one man to do this; it was for all who had staked their lives in the struggle, and held together through thick and thin. This was the only way in which I could show my gratitude to my comrades in this desolate spot. I could see that they understood and accepted it in the spirit in which it was offered. Five weather-beaten, frost-bitten fists they were that grasped the pole, raised the waving flag in the air, and planted it as the first at the geographical South Pole. "Thus we plant thee, beloved flag, at the South Pole, and give to the plain on which it lies the name of King Haakon VII.'s Plateau." That moment will certainly be remembered by all of us who stood there.

TEXT #8

Scott's Last Expedition

Robert Falcon Scott, January 1912

Published by Smith Elder in 1913

http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1481376&pageno=1

Excerpt Ch. XVIII
THE SUMMIT JOURNEY TO THE POLE

P1 It is wonderful to think that two long marches would land us at the Pole. We left our depot today with nine days' **provisions**, so that it ought to be a certain thing now, and the only **appalling** possibility the sight of the Norwegian flag **forestalling** ours. Little Bowers continues his **indefatigable** efforts to get good sights, and it is wonderful how he works them up in his sleeping-bag in our **congested** tent. (Minimum for night -27.5°.) Only 27 miles from the Pole. We ought to do it now.

P2 Tuesday, January_16. Camp 68. Height 9760. T. -23.5°. The worst has happened, or nearly the worst. We marched well in the morning and covered 7 1/2 miles. Noon sight showed us in Lat. 89° 42' S., and we started off in high spirits in the afternoon, feeling that to-morrow would see us at our destination. About the second hour of the march Bowers' sharp eyes detected what he thought was a **cairn**; he was uneasy about it, but argued that it must be a **sastrugus**. Half an hour later he detected a black speck ahead. Soon we knew that this could not be a natural snow feature. We marched on, found that it was a black flag tied to a sledge bearer; near by the remains of a camp; sledge tracks and ski tracks going and coming and the clear trace of dogs' paws--many dogs. This told us the whole story. The Norwegians have forestalled us and are first at the Pole. It is a terrible

provisions	**appalling**	**forestalling**
supplies, especially food and other necessities	causing dismay or horror	to act beforehand with or get ahead of
indefatigable	**congested**	**cairn**
inability to become tired out	overcrowded or overburdened	a heap of stones on top of each other, used as a landmark

disappointment, and I am very sorry for my loyal companions. Many thoughts come and much discussion have we had. Tomorrow we must march on to the Pole and then hasten home with all the speed we can compass. All the daydreams must go; it will be a **wearisome** return. We are **descending** in altitude--certainly also the Norwegians found an easy way up.

Wednesday, January 17. Camp 69. T. -22° at start. Night -21°. The Pole. Yes, but under very different circumstances from those expected. We have had a horrible day--add to our disappointment a head wind 4 to 5, with a temperature -22°, and companions labouring on with cold feet and hands. P3

We started at 7.30, none of us having slept much after the shock of our discovery. We followed the Norwegian sledge tracks for some way; as far as we make out there are only two men. In about three miles we passed two small cairns. Then the weather overcast, and the tracks being increasingly drifted up and obviously going too far to the west, we decided to make straight for the Pole according to our calculations. At 12.30 Evans had such cold hands we camped for lunch--an excellent 'week-end one.' We had marched 7.4 miles. Lat. sight gave 89° 53' 37". We started out and did 6 1/2 miles due south. To-night little Bowers is laying himself out to get sights in terrible difficult circumstances; the wind is blowing hard, T. -21°, and there is that curious damp, cold feeling in the air which chills one to the bone in no time. We have been descending again, I think, but there looks to be a rise ahead; otherwise there is very little that is different from the awful **monotony** of past days. Great God! this is an awful place and terrible enough for us to have laboured to it without the reward of priority. Well, it is something to have got P4

sastrugus	**wearisome**	**descending**
A long wavelike ridge of snow, formed by the wind and found on the polar plains	tiresome	to move from above to below
monotony		
wearisome routine; dull and unchanging		

here, and the wind may be our friend to-morrow. We have had a fat Polar **hoosh** in spite of our **chagrin**, and feel comfortable inside--added a small stick of chocolate and the queer taste of a cigarette brought by Wilson. Now for the run home and a desperate struggle. I wonder if we can do it.

Thursday morning, January 18. Decided after summing up all observations that we were 3.5 miles away from the Pole--one mile beyond it and 3 to the right. More or less in this direction Bowers saw a cairn or tent. **P5**

We have just arrived at this tent, 2 miles from our camp, therefore about 1 1/2 miles from the Pole. In the tent we find a record of five Norwegians having been here, as follows: **P6**

Roald Amundsen
Olav Olavson Bjaaland
Hilmer Hanssen
Sverre H. Hassel
Oscar Wisting.
16 December 1911

hoosh	chagrin	
a thick stew made from pemmican (a mix of dried meat, fat, cereal) or other meat, biscuits and water	a feeling of disappointment or humiliation	

TEXT #9

Scott's Last Expedition
Robert Falcon Scott, March 1912
Published by Smith Elder in 1913

http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1481376&pageno=1

Excerpt Ch. XX
THE LAST MARCH

Friday, March 16 *or Saturday* 17.—Lost track of dates, but think the last correct. **P1**
Tragedy all along the line. At lunch, the day before yesterday, poor Titus Oates said he couldn't go on; he proposed we should leave him in his sleeping-bag. That we could not do, and **induced** him to come on, on the afternoon march. In spite of its awful nature for him he struggled on and we made a few miles. At night he was worse and we knew the end had come.

Should this be found I want these facts recorded. Oates' last thoughts were of his **P2**
Mother, but immediately before he took pride in thinking that his **regiment** would be pleased with the bold way in which he met his death. We can testify to his bravery. He has **borne intense** suffering for weeks without complaint, and to the very last was able and willing to discuss outside subjects. He did not—would not—give up hope to the very end. He was a brave soul. This was the end. He slept through the night before last, hoping not to wake; but he woke in the morning—yesterday. It was blowing a blizzard. He said, 'I am just going outside and may be some time.' He went out into the blizzard and we have not seen him since.

I take this opportunity of saying that we have stuck to our sick companions to the last. **P3**

induced	**regiment**	**borne**
to lead or move by persuasion or influence, as to some action or state of mind	Military- unit of ground forces, consisting of battalions or battle groups, headquarters etc.	to remain constant under a heavy load
intense		
very great, a lot of		

In case of Edgar Evans, when absolutely out of food and he lay **insensible**, the safety of the remainder seemed to demand his **abandonment**, but Providence mercifully removed him at this critical moment. He died a natural death, and we did not leave him till two hours after his death. We knew that poor Oates was walking to his death, but though we tried to **dissuade** him, we knew it was the act of a brave man and an English gentleman. We all hope to meet the end with a similar spirit, and assuredly the end is not far.

P4

I can only write at lunch and then only occasionally. The cold is intense, -40° at midday. My companions are unendingly cheerful, but we are all on the verge of serious frostbites, and though we constantly talk of **fetching** through I don't think anyone of us believes it in his heart.

P5

We are cold on the march now, and at all times except meals. Yesterday we had to lay up for a blizzard and to-day we move dreadfully slowly. We are at No. 14 pony camp, only two pony marches from One Ton Depot. We leave here our **theodolite**, a camera, and Oates' sleeping-bags. Diaries, &c., and geological specimens carried at Wilson's special request, will be found with us or on our sledge.

P6

Sunday, March 18.—To-day, lunch, we are 21 miles from the depot. Ill fortune presses, but better may come. We have had more wind and drift from ahead yesterday; had to stop marching; wind N.W., force 4, temp. -35°. No human being could face it, and we are worn out *nearly*.

P7

My right foot has gone, nearly all the toes—two days ago I was proud possessor of best feet. These are the steps of my downfall. Like an ass I mixed a small spoonful of curry powder with my melted pemmican—it gave me violent indigestion. I lay awake and in pain all night; woke and felt done on the march; foot went and I didn't know it. A very small measure of neglect and have a foot which is not pleasant to **contemplate**. Bowers

insensible	**abandonment**	**dissuade**
unaware; unconscious	to leave something or someone	persuade not to do something
fetching	**theodolite**	**contemplate**
to go by an indirect route	precision instrument having a telescopic sight for establishing horizontal and vertical angles	think fully or deeply about

takes first place in condition, but there is not much to choose after all. The others are still confident of getting through—or pretend to be—I don't know! We have the last *half* fill of oil in our **primus** and a very small quantity of spirit—this alone between us and thirst. The wind is fair for the moment, and that is perhaps a fact to help. The mileage would have seemed ridiculously small on our outward journey.

Monday, March 19.—Lunch. We camped with difficulty last night, and were dreadfully **P8** cold till after our supper of cold pemmican and biscuit and a half a **pannikin** of cocoa cooked over the spirit. Then, **contrary** to expectation, we got warm and all slept well. To-day we started in the usual dragging manner. Sledge dreadfully heavy. We are 15 1/2 miles from the depot and ought to get there in three days. What progress! We have two days' food but barely a day's fuel. All our feet are getting bad—Wilson's best, my right foot worst, left all right. There is no chance to nurse one's feet till we can get hot food into us. Amputation is the least I can hope for now, but will the trouble spread? That is the serious question. The weather doesn't give us a chance—the wind from N. to N.W. and -40° temp, to-day.

Wednesday, March 11.—Got within 11 miles of depot Monday night; had to lay up all **P9** yesterday in severe blizzard.*27* To-day **forlorn** hope, Wilson and Bowers going to depot for fuel.

Thursday, March 22 *and* 23.—Blizzard bad as ever—Wilson and Bowers unable **P10** to start—to-morrow last chance—no fuel and only one or two of food left—must be near the end. Have decided it shall be natural—we shall march for the depot with or without our effects and die in our tracks.

Thursday, March 29.—Since the 21st we have had a continuous **gale** from W.S.W. and S.W.

primus	**pannikin**	**contrary**
a portable or fixed device that gives off heat for cooking, etc., using coal, gas, wood	a small pan or metal cup	opposite in direction or position
forlorn	**gale**	
unhappy or miserable	very strong wind	

We had fuel to make two cups of tea apiece and bare food for two days on the 20th. Every day we have been ready to start for our depot *11 miles* away, but outside the door of the tent it remains a scene of whirling drift. I do not think we can hope for any better things now. We shall stick it out to the end, but we are getting weaker, of course, and the end cannot be far.

It seems a pity, but I do not think I can write more.

R. SCOTT.

For God's sake look after our people.

_____

Wilson and Bowers were found in the attitude of sleep, their sleeping-bags closed over their heads as they would naturally close them. **P12**

Scott died later. He had thrown back the flaps of his sleeping-bag and opened his coat. The little wallet containing the three notebooks was under his shoulders and his arm flung across Wilson. So they were found eight months later.

_____

Inside the front cover of the third notebook were the following words: 'Diary can be read by finder to ensure recording of Records, &c., but Diary should be sent to my widow.' And on the first page: **P13**

'Send this diary to my **widow**.

'R. SCOTT.'

The word 'wife' had been struck out and 'widow' written in.

widow		
a woman whose husband has died		

EXTENDED READING

Letters

Robert Falcon Scott, 1912

Published by Smith Elder in 1913

http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile?fk_files=1481376&pageno=1

Excerpt: Ch. XX

To Mrs. Bowers

My Dear Mrs. Bowers,

I am afraid this will reach you after one of the heaviest blows of your life. P1

I write when we are very near the end of our journey, and I am finishing it in P2
company with two gallant, noble gentlemen. One of these is your son. He had come to be one of my closest and soundest friends, and I appreciate his wonderful upright nature, his ability and energy. As the troubles have thickened his dauntless spirit ever shone brighter and he has remained cheerful, hopeful, and indomitable to the end.

The ways of Providence are inscrutable, but there must be some reason why such a P3
young, vigorous and promising life is taken.

My whole heart goes out in pity for you.

Yours, R. SCOTT.

To the end he has talked of you and his sisters. One sees what a happy home he must have had and perhaps it is well to look back on nothing but happiness. P4

He remains unselfish, self-reliant and splendidly hopeful to the end, believing in God's mercy to you. P5

Message to the Public

The causes of the disaster are not due to faulty organisation, but to misfortune in all risks which had to be undertaken. P6

1. The loss of pony transport in March 1911 obliged me to start later than I had intended, and obliged the limits of stuff transported to be narrowed. P7
2. The weather throughout the outward journey, and especially the long gale in 83° S., stopped us.
3. The soft snow in lower reaches of glacier again reduced pace.

We fought these untoward events with a will and conquered, but it cut into our provision reserve. P8

Every detail of our food supplies, clothing and depôts made on the interior ice-sheet and over that long stretch of 700 miles to the Pole and back, worked out to perfection. The advance party would have returned to the glacier in fine form and with surplus of food, but for the astonishing failure of the man whom we had least expected to fail. Edgar Evans was thought the strongest man of the party. P9

The Beardmore Glacier is not difficult in fine weather, but on our return we did not get a single completely fine day; this with a sick companion enormously increased our anxieties. P10

As I have said elsewhere we got into frightfully rough ice and Edgar Evans received a concussion of the brain—he died a natural death, but left us a shaken party with the season unduly advanced. P11

But all the facts above enumerated were as nothing to the surprise which awaited us on the Barrier. I maintain that our arrangements for returning were quite adequate, and that no one in the world would have expected the temperatures and surfaces which we encountered at this time of the year. On the summit in lat. 85° 86° we had -20°, -30°. On the Barrier in lat. 82°, 10,000 feet lower, we had -30° in the day, -47° at night pretty regularly, with continuous head wind during our day marches. It is clear that these circumstances come on very suddenly, and our wreck is certainly due to this sudden advent of severe weather, which does not seem to have any satisfactory cause. I do not think human beings ever came through such a month as we have come through, and we should have got through in spite of the weather but for the sickening of a second companion, Captain Oates, and a shortage of fuel in our depôts for which I cannot account, and finally, but for the storm which has fallen on us within 11 miles of the depôt at which we hoped to secure our final supplies. Surely misfortune could scarcely have exceeded this last blow. We arrived within 11 miles of our old One Ton Camp with fuel for one last meal and food for two days. For four days we have been unable to leave the tent—the gale howling about us. We are weak, writing is difficult, but for my own sake I do not regret this journey, which has shown that Englishmen can endure hardships, help one another, and meet death with P12

as great a fortitude as ever in the past. We took risks, we knew we took them; things have come out against us, and therefore we have no cause for complaint, but bow to the will of Providence, determined still to do our best to the last. But if we have been willing to give our lives to this enterprise, which is for the honour of our country, I appeal to our countrymen to see that those who depend on us are properly cared for.

Had we lived, I should have had a tale to tell of the hardihood, endurance, and courage of my companions which would have stirred the heart of every Englishman. These rough notes and our dead bodies must tell the tale, but surely, surely, a great rich country like ours will see that those who are dependent on us are properly provided for. P13

R. SCOTT.

EXTENDED READING

The Voyages of Captain Scott

Charles Thurley

Published by Kessinger Publishing in 2004

http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/6721/pg6721.txt

Excerpt: Ch. IX - THE SOUTH POLE

From the very beginning of the march on January 11 the pulling was heavy, but P1
when the sun came out the surface became as bad as bad could be. All the time the sledge rasped and creaked, and the work of moving it onward was agonizing. At lunch-time they had managed to cover six miles but at fearful cost to themselves, and although when they camped for the night they were only about 74 miles from the Pole, Scott asked himself whether they could possibly keep up such a strain for seven more days. 'It takes it out of us like anything. None of us ever had such hard work before.... Our chance still holds good if we can put the work in, but it's a terribly trying time.'

For a few minutes during the next afternoon they experienced the almost forgotten P2
delight of having the sledge following easily. The experience was very short but it was also very sweet, for Scott had begun to fear that their powers of pulling were rapidly weakening, and those few minutes showed him that they only wanted a good surface to get on as merrily as of old. At night they were within 63 miles of the Pole, and just longing for a better surface to help them on their way.

But whatever the condition of the surface, Bowers continued to do his work with P3
characteristic thoroughness and imperturbability; and after this appalling march he

insisted, in spite of Scott's protest, on taking sights after they had camped--an all the more remarkable display of energy as he, being the only one of the party who pulled on foot, had spent an even more strenuous day than the others, who had been 'comparatively restful on ski.'

Again, on the next march, they had to pull with all their might to cover some 11 miles. 'It is wearisome work this tugging and straining to advance a light sledge. Still, we get along. I did manage to get my thoughts off the work for a time to-day, which is very restful. We should be in a poor way without our ski, though Bowers manages to struggle through the soft snow without tiring his short legs.' Sunday night, January 14, found them at Camp 66 and less than 40 miles from the Pole. Steering was the great difficulty on this march, because a light southerly wind with very low drift often prevented Scott from seeing anything, and Bowers, in Scott's shadow, gave directions. By this time the feet of the whole party were beginning, mainly owing to the bad condition of their finnesko, to suffer from the cold. P4

'Oates seems to be feeling the cold and fatigue more than the rest of us, but we are all very fit. It is a critical time, but we ought to pull through.... Oh! for a few fine days! So close it seems and only the weather to balk us.' P5

Another terrible surface awaited them on the morrow, and they were all 'pretty well done' when they camped for lunch. There they decided to leave their last depot, but although their reduced load was now very light, Scott feared that the friction would not be greatly reduced. A pleasant surprise, however, was in store for him, as after lunch the sledge ran very lightly, and a capital march was made. 'It is wonderful,' he wrote on that P6

night (January 15), 'to think that two long marches would land us at the Pole. We left our depot to-day with nine days' provisions, so that it ought to be a certain thing now, and the only appalling possibility the sight of the Norwegian flag forestalling ours. Little Bowers continues his indefatigable efforts to get good sights, and it is wonderful how he works them up in his sleeping-bag in our congested tent. Only 27 miles from the Pole. We ought to do it now.'

The next morning's march took them 7-1/2 miles nearer and their noon sight showed them in Lat. 89° 42' S.; and feeling that the following day would see them at the Pole they started off after lunch in the best of spirits. Then, after advancing for an hour or so, Bowers' sharp eyes detected what he thought was a cairn, but although he was uneasy about it he argued that it must be a sastrugus. P7

'Half an hour later he detected a black speck ahead. Soon we knew that this could not be a natural snow feature. We marched on, found that it was a black flag tied to a sledge bearer; near by the remains of a camp; sledge tracks and ski tracks going and coming and the clear trace of dogs' paws--many dogs. This told us the whole story. The Norwegians have forestalled us and are first at the Pole. It is a terrible disappointment, and P8

I am very sorry for my loyal companions. Many thoughts come and much discussion have we had. To-morrow we must march on to the Pole and then hasten home with all the speed we can compass. All the day-dreams must go; it will be a wearisome return. Certainly also the Norwegians found an easy way up.' P9

Very little sleep came to any of the party after the shock of this discovery, and when they started at 7.30 on the next morning (January 17) head winds with a temperature of -22° added to their depression of spirit. For some way they followed the Norwegian tracks, P10

and in about three miles they passed two cairns. Then, as the tracks became increasingly drifted up and were obviously leading them too far to the west, they decided to make straight for the Pole according to their calculations.

During the march they covered about 14 miles, and at night Scott wrote in his P11
journal, 'The Pole. Yes, but under very different circumstances from those expected.'

That announcement tells its own story, and it would be impertinent to guess at the P12
feelings of those intrepid travelers when they found themselves forestalled. Nevertheless they had achieved the purpose they had set themselves, and the fact that they could not claim the reward of priority makes not one jot of difference in estimating the honours that belong to them. Well,' Scott continued, 'it is something to have got here, and the wind may be our friend to-morrow.... Now for the run home and a desperate struggle. I wonder if we can do it.'

On the following morning after summing up all their observations, they came to P13
the conclusion that they were one mile beyond the Pole and three miles to the right of it, in which direction, more or less, Bowers could see a tent or cairn. A march of two miles from their camp took them to the tent, in which they found a record of five Norwegians having been there:

Roald Amundsen
Olav Olavson Bjaaland
Hilmer Hanssen
Sverre H. Hassel
Oscar Wisting.

EXTENDED READING

A Time Line of the Exploration of Antarctica
Cool Antarctica

http://www.coolantarctica.com/Antarctica fact file/History/exploration and history.htm

British Antarctic Expedition 1910-13 Gallery
Scott Polar Research Institute
University of Cambridge

http://www.spri.cam.ac.uk/library/pictures/catalogue/bae1910-13/gallery/