

12. Wilbur Wright _____ in 1912.
(die)
13. Orville Wright _____ for many more years.
(live)
14. Their invention _____ the world.
(change)

Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart

Before
You Read

1. When was the first time you traveled by airplane?
2. Do you recognize the people in the photos below?



CD 2, TR 02

Read the following textbook article. Pay special attention to the past-tense forms of *be*.



Charles Lindbergh,
1902–1974

He became famous because he **was** the first person to fly alone across the Atlantic Ocean. His plane **was** in the air for 33 hours. The distance of the flight **was** 3,600 miles. There **were** thousands of people in New York to welcome him home. He **was** an American hero. He **was** only 25 years old.

Another famous American aviator⁵ **was** Amelia Earhart. She **was** the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean alone. She **was** 34 years old. Americans **were** in love with Earhart. In 1937, however, she **was** on a flight around the world when her plane disappeared somewhere in the Pacific Ocean. No one really knows what happened to Earhart.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, flight **was** new. It **was** not for everyone. It **was** only for the brave and adventurous. Two adventurers **were** Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart.

Charles Lindbergh loved to fly. He **was** born in 1902, one year before the Wright brothers' historic flight. In 1927, a man offered a \$25,000 reward for the first person to fly from New York to Paris nonstop. Lindbergh **was** a pilot for the United States Mail Service at that time. He wanted to win the prize.



Amelia Earhart,
1897–1937

⁵Aviator means pilot.

8.4 Past Tense of *Be*

The verb *be* has two forms in the past: *was* and *were*.

EXAMPLES			EXPLANATION
Subject I Charles He Amelia She The airplane It	Was was	Complement interested in the story. a pilot. brave. a pilot too. popular. new in 1903. in the air for 12 seconds.	<i>I</i> <i>He</i> <i>She</i> <i>It</i> singular subject } <i>was</i>
Subject We You Amelia and Charles They	Were were	Complement interested in the story. in class yesterday. brave. adventurous.	<i>We</i> <i>You</i> <i>They</i> plural subject } <i>were</i>
There There	Was was	Singular Subject a celebration in 2003.	<i>There + was + singular noun</i>
There There	Were were	Plural Subject thousands of people.	<i>There + were + plural noun</i>
Charles Lindbergh was not the first person to fly. We were not at the 2003 celebration.			To make a negative statement, put <i>not</i> after <i>was</i> or <i>were</i> .
I wasn't here yesterday. You weren't in class yesterday.			The contraction for <i>was not</i> is <i>wasn't</i> . The contraction for <i>were not</i> is <i>weren't</i> .

EXERCISE 5 Fill in the blanks with *was* or *were*.

EXAMPLE Lindbergh and Earhart were very famous.

- The Wright brothers _____ the inventors of the airplane.
- The first airplane _____ in the air for 12 seconds.
- Lindbergh and Earhart _____ aviators.
- There _____ thousands of people in New York to welcome Lindbergh home.
- Earhart _____ the first woman to fly across the Atlantic Ocean.
- I _____ interested in the story about Earhart and Lindbergh.
- _____ you surprised that a woman was a famous aviator?
- Lindbergh _____ in Paris.
- We _____ happy to read about flight.
- There _____ a celebration of 100 years of flight in 2003.
- There _____ thousands of people at the celebration.

8.5 Uses of *Be*

EXAMPLES	EXPLANATION
Lindbergh was an aviator.	Classification of the subject
Lindbergh was brave.	Description of the subject
Lindbergh was in Paris.	Location of the subject
Earhart was from Kansas.	Place of origin of the subject
She was born in 1897.	With <i>born</i>
There were thousands of people in New York to welcome Lindbergh.	With <i>there</i>
Lindbergh was 25 years old in 1927.	With age

EXERCISE 6 Read each statement. Then write a negative statement with the words in parentheses ().

EXAMPLE The Wright brothers were inventors. (Earhart and Lindbergh)
Earhart and Lindbergh weren't inventors.

1. The train was common transportation in the early 1900s. (the airplane)

2. Earhart was from Kansas. (Lindbergh)

3. Lindbergh's last flight was successful. (Earhart's last flight)

4. Lindbergh's plane was in the air for many hours. (the Wright brothers' first plane)

5. The Wright brothers were inventors. (Earhart)

6. There were a lot of trains 100 years ago. (planes)

7. Lindbergh was born in the twentieth century. (the Wright brothers)

8. The 1903 flight at Kitty Hawk was successful. (the 2003 flight)
