



Before You Read

A. Scanning. Read the timeline of Amelia Earhart's life. What record did she break?

Amelia Earhart (1897–1937)

1918: Sees a small airplane take off in the snow of Toronto, Canada. Decides she wants to fly.

1921: Becomes a pilot at age 24.

1932: Breaks a world record: is the first woman to fly a plane alone across the Atlantic Ocean.

1937, May–June: Plans to be the first woman to fly a plane around the world. Flies with guide Fred Noonan across the U.S., south to Brazil, and across Africa, Asia, and Australia.

1937, June 29: Earhart and Noonan arrive in New Guinea.

1937, July 2: They take off again, heading for an island in the Pacific Ocean. They are never seen again . . .

Amelia Earhart in front of her bi-plane named "Friendship" on the island of Newfoundland, Canada

B. Predict. What do you think happened to Earhart and Noonan? Read the passage to check your ideas.

THE MISSING PILOT

1 On July 2, 1937, Amelia Earhart and Fred Noonan left New Guinea for Howland Island in the Pacific. This was the longest and most dangerous part of their trip around the world. Earhart had trouble shortly after takeoff. The weather was stormy, so she had to fly
 5 at 3,000 meters (10,000 feet). Going this high, the plane used up gas quickly.

After about twenty hours, Earhart and Noonan **approached** Howland Island. The island was only about 105 kilometers (65 miles) away, but the **bright** sun was **shining** in their faces, so
 10 they couldn't see it. Near Howland, a ship, the *Itasca*, was waiting. Earhart contacted the ship: "Gas is low," she said. The *Itasca* tried to maintain contact with her, but it got no **response**. Finally, the *Itasca* called for help. People searched for Earhart and Noonan for days. Despite great **efforts**, they found nothing.

15 | Answers to a Mystery?

What happened to Amelia Earhart? No one knows for sure. During the **flight**, she probably **headed** in the wrong direction because the sun was bright and it was hard to see. Perhaps she got lost; soon after, her plane ran out of gas and she died at sea. Another idea is
 20 that she survived the plane **crash**, swam to an uninhabited¹ island, and later died there. A more extreme theory is that she survived the crash and secretly returned to the U.S. with a new identity.

The first theory seems most likely. However, none of these ideas has been proven. Today, people are still **investigating** Earhart's
 25 and Noonan's **disappearance** (Noonan's body has also never been found). Whatever happened, Earhart probably died as she wished. "When I go," she said, "I'd like best to go in my plane."

¹ If a place is **uninhabited**, it has no people.



"Women must try to do things as men have tried. When they fail, their failure must be but a challenge to others."

Amelia Earhart

Reading Comprehension

Multiple Choice. Choose the best answer for each question.

Gist

1. Another title for this reading could be _____.
 - a. Pilot Mystery Is Finally Solved
 - b. Amelia Earhart Breaks Another Record
 - c. What Happened to Amelia Earhart?
 - d. The First Female Pilot in the U.S.A.

Detail

2. Why was flying to Howland Island difficult?
 - a. Earhart was sick.
 - b. Noonan didn't have a map.
 - c. Their plane was damaged.
 - d. It was very far from New Guinea.

Detail

3. Shortly after taking off from New Guinea, what happened?
 - a. Earhart's plane ran out of gas.
 - b. There was a bad storm.
 - c. Fred Noonan died.
 - d. Earhart's plane crashed.

Sequence

4. What happened after Earhart contacted the *Itasca* and before people started searching for her?
 - a. She asked for more gas.
 - b. The *Itasca* spoke with Earhart.
 - c. She tried to land on the *Itasca*.
 - d. The *Itasca* called for help.

Vocabulary

5. Which of these words or phrases is most similar in meaning to *ran out of* in line 19?
 - a. removed
 - b. filled up with
 - c. had no more of
 - d. caught on fire from

Inference

6. In line 27, when Earhart says "When I go" what does *go* mean?
 - a. fly
 - b. die
 - c. leave
 - d. live

Inference

7. Which statement would the writer of the passage agree with?
 - a. Earhart's plane probably ran out of gas and she died at sea.
 - b. It is possible that Noonan killed Earhart.
 - c. Earhart probably died on an island in the Pacific.
 - d. Earhart and Noonan might still be alive today.



Did You Know?

This jar of face cream was found on a remote Nikumaroro Island site. Experts believe it belonged to Amelia Earhart.

Identifying Transition Words

Writers use transition words to add or contrast information. Identifying transition words will help you connect one idea to another.

Adding information

The sun was bright, and it was hard to see.

The sun was bright. In addition, it was hard to see.

The sun was bright. It was also hard to see.

Contrasting information

The Itasca tried to contact her, but it got no response.

The Itasca tried to contact her. However, it got no response.

The Itasca tried to contact her. It got no response, though.

A. Multiple Choice. Read these sentences about Amelia Earhart. Circle the correct word.

1. She studied auto repair in college. (**However / Though**), she changed her focus and later studied medicine.
2. She began taking flying lessons in 1921 (**and / in addition**) later that year bought her first plane.
3. She borrowed money from her family for the plane. She (**and / also**) used the money she earned as a telephone operator.

B. Completion. Complete the summary of Amelia Earhart's disappearance with the phrases in the box (a–e). One phrase is extra.

- a. and she had to fly very high
- b. but they weren't able to stay in contact
- c. The search team found nothing, though
- d. In addition, it was shining in her eyes
- e. However, she never made it there

Amelia Earhart left New Guinea for Howland Island on July 2, 1937.

1. _____. After takeoff, there was a storm, 2. _____. After 20 hours of flying, she approached Howland Island. She called the ship Itasca to say gas was low, 3. _____. The ship called for help, and a search was begun. 4. _____.

Critical Thinking Discuss with a partner. Do you think we will ever find out what happened to Earhart? Why or why not?

Vocabulary Practice

A. Completion. Complete the information by circling the correct word in each pair.

Jim Thompson was an American businessman who helped revive Thailand's silk industry in the 1950s and 1960s. On March 26, 1967, Thompson

1. (**maintained** / **headed**) out alone for an afternoon walk in Malaysia's Cameron Highlands, and was never seen again. A huge search 2. (**approach** / **effort**) involved more than 400 people spreading out into the jungle, but nothing was found. After a(n) 3. (**investigation** / **flight**), the conclusion was that he fell into an animal trap or was eaten by a tiger. However, other ideas have been put forward to explain Thompson's 4. (**disappearance** / **response**). Some believe he was murdered, while others think he faked his own death. His disappearance may always remain a mystery. However, Jim Thompson's presence can still be felt. Shoppers crowd his stores in Thailand to buy 5. (**shine** / **bright**) scarves and elegant ties. His former home in Bangkok remains one of the capital's top tourist attractions.



- ▶ The last photo taken of Jim Thompson before he disappeared in Malaysia in 1967

B. Words in Context. Complete each sentence with the correct answer.

Word Link We can add **dis-** to some words to show an opposite meaning. For example, if something *disappears*, you can no longer see it. If you *dislike* someone, you don't like them.

VIEWING Earhart Mystery

Before You Watch

A. Matching. You will hear these words in the video. Match them to their definitions. Then add them to the photo captions below.

1. spy	•	a. the feeling that you need to drink something
2. reef	•	b. a long line of rocks, the top of which is just below or above the sea
3. thirst	•	c. a person who tries to find out secret information

B. Discussion. The pictures and captions below show different possibilities of what happened to Earhart. Which is least likely? Which is most likely?

While You Watch

A. Sequencing. Number the theories below from 1 to 4 in the order they appear in the video.



Earhart landed on a(n) _____, swam to shore, but later died of _____.



Earhart went to the Marshall Islands to _____ on the Japanese _____.



Earhart landed near Howland Island, where her plane sank in the ocean.



Earhart didn't die at sea but returned to the U.S. under a different name.

B. Completion. Complete the word web about the video. Use words from the box. Two words are extra.

captured	different	housewife	reason	swam
died	gas	ocean	spy	time

- flew toward Howland Island
- ran out of 1. _____
- landed in the 2. _____
- boat sank

- flew to a(n) 3. _____ island
- landed on reef and then went to island
- died of thirst

What happened to Amelia Earhart?

- flew to Marshall Islands
- 4. _____ by Japanese
- 5. _____ there

- American 6. _____
- flew to Marshall Islands
- gave U.S. Navy 7. _____ to go there

- returned to U.S.
- lived as a(n) 8. _____
- new name: Irene Bolam

After You Watch

Critical Thinking. Discuss these questions with a partner.

1. After viewing the video, what do you think probably happened to Amelia Earhart?
2. Have any of your ideas about Earhart changed from watching the video?
3. Is it important that we find out what happened to Earhart? Why or why not?