

AMELIA EARHART

QUEEN OF THE AIR



**Lexile Ranges**

Level 1: Less than 810

Level 2: 810-1000L

Level 3: 1010-1200L

Level 4: 1210-1400L



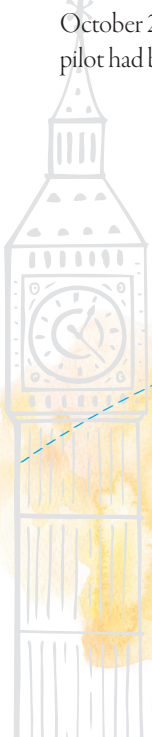
Amelia Mary Earhart is probably the most famous woman pilot in history. She was born in Kansas in 1897. That was before airplanes even existed. She loved to play with her sister, Muriel, who everyone called Pidge. Amelia's mom wanted her girls to have adventures. During the early 1900s, some people thought girls should stay at home and let men have jobs and do dangerous, exciting things. But Amelia's mom didn't want her girls to just follow the rules other people made. Amelia's mom wanted her girls to have adventures.

Amelia and Pidge liked to climb trees. They also hunted rats and loved to go sledding down snowy hills. These were not things girls were supposed to do. One day Amelia and her uncle made a wooden ramp, kind of like a roller coaster. Amelia rode down the ramp in a wooden box. The wooden box crashed and broke. Amelia's lip was bruised but she was so excited. She shouted, "Oh, Pidge, it's just like flying!"

When Amelia was in high school, her family moved to Chicago. Amelia went to Hyde Park High School and took lots of science classes. After she finished school she wanted to find a job. She kept a scrapbook of newspaper articles about women who had interesting jobs. She liked some of the jobs that men did. She thought those were more exciting.

After Amelia finished high school, airplanes were still new. In 1920, Amelia and her father visited an airfield. She took her first ride in an airplane. She said, "By the time I had got two or three hundred feet off the ground I knew I had to fly."

Amelia learned to fly. She bought a used, bright yellow airplane that she called "The Canary." On October 22, 1922, Amelia set a world record for female pilots. She flew higher than any woman pilot had before.



Lots of pilots at that time were trying to fly better than anyone else. Some wanted to fly higher than anyone. Others wanted to fly farther. In 1927, Charles Linbergh was the first pilot to fly by himself across the Atlantic Ocean. A year later, Amelia was able to ride with another pilot across the Atlantic Ocean. She was happy, but wanted to fly her own plane across the ocean. "Maybe someday," she said, "I'll try it alone."

Amelia wanted to set records of her own. In 1928, she was the first woman pilot to fly across North America and back again. Then in 1931, she flew higher than anyone.

Amelia became famous because she was such a good pilot. Some reporters called her the "Queen of the Air."

In 1932, when she was 34 years old, Amelia decided to try to fly across the Atlantic Ocean to Paris, France. She flew for 14 hours and 56 minutes. She had to fight strong winds, ice, and mechanical problems. When she finally saw land, she safely ended her flight in a field. But she didn't land in Paris. She was in Ireland! She was the first woman to fly solo, non-stop, across the Atlantic Ocean.

Amelia wasn't the only woman pilot, but she was the most famous. People sold clothing and luggage with her name on them.

Amelia set many new records. But she wanted a new adventure. She wanted to fly around the world. This was going to be hard work, and she needed to plan carefully.



To get ready for her flight, Amelia had someone teach her how to better fly long distances. She also became a teacher. She taught other women who wanted to be a pilot like her. At the university where she was a teacher, they helped her get ready for her flight around the world.

Amelia would not be the first pilot to fly around the world. But she wanted to fly around the equator. That was the longest path. She had a special plane built that had a really large fuel tank.

Amelia asked Fred Noonan to be her navigator because he knew how to navigate boats and planes.

On March 17, 1937, Amelia started her adventure. She first flew from California to Hawaii. She had a crew of people to help with the trip. But the plane had troubles. They had to stop the flight to get the plane fixed.

When the plane was fixed, Amelia tried again. This time she flew from California to Florida. Only her navigator was with her this time. After Florida, they made many stops in South America, Africa, India, and Southeast Asia. Finally, they arrived at Lae, Papua New Guinea on June 29, 1937. They had flown about 22,000 miles! They only had one more flight to go. They had to fly over the Pacific Ocean.

Amelia and Fred took off in a heavily loaded plane. They were going to land on Howland Island, over 2,000 miles away. But something went wrong, and Amelia's plane disappeared. Many people tried to find Amelia and Fred. They never found them, or the plane. Some people think the plane might have had engine troubles. This made everyone sad, but some people say she disappeared doing her favorite thing.

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