

## AMELIA EARHART



**Directions:** Read the passage below, then answer the questions.

Amelia Mary Earhart was an American aviation pioneer and an inspirational figure. She was born in Atchison, Kansas. Her father was a lawyer and her grandfather a former federal judge, and leading citizen of Atchison. In her early years, Amelia was often referred to as a 'tomboy because of her great sense of adventure. She enjoyed activities, such as shooting rats with a rifle, climbing trees, and keeping wildlife such as worms and a tree toad; which were not common for girls of her age. Amelia's upbringing was unconventional since her mother did not believe in molding her children into "nice little girls. Instead, she inspired them to achieve greater freedom that wasn't common for the time. This essence of relative freedom and adventure was a prevailing characteristic throughout Amelia's life.

On December 28, 1920, she had her first flight with pilot Frank Hawks. This flight forever changed Earhart's life. "By the time I had got two or three hundred feet off the ground," she said, "I knew I had to fly. With her determination and help from her parents, Amelia was able to receive flying lessons from Anita Snook, a pioneer female pilot. In 1923, Amelia was the 16th women to be issued a pilot's license.

Amelia was the first woman to make the flight across the Atlantic. In 1928, she was invited to participate in a historic flight across the Atlantic. Then together with pilot Bill Stultz and co-pilot Slim Gordon, Amelia flew across the Atlantic Ocean in the airplane Friendship. She was the navigator on the flight. After twenty one hours of flying, the plane landed in Wales. Earhart was received back in the United States as a hero. and she even got to meet President Calvin Coolidge at the White House. Amelia was not satisfied, however. She wanted to pilot the plane and make the flight by herself across the Atlantic. On May 20, 1932 she took off from Harbour Grace, Newfoundland and fourteen hours later she had crossed the Atlantic Ocean. She became only the second person after Charles Lindbergh to successfully fly across the Atlantic Ocean solo. She received many awards including becoming the first woman to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross from Congress.

Earhart joined the faculty of the Purdue University aviation department in 1935 as a visiting faculty member to counsel women on careers and help inspire others with her love for aviation. She was also a member of the National Woman's Party, and an early supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment.

During an attempt to make a circumnavigational flight of the globe in 1937, Earhart disappeared over the central Pacific Ocean near Howland Island. She was declared dead in absentia on January 5, 1939.

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1. Why was Amelia often referred to as a 'tomboy and what kind of activities did she enjoy in her early years?

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2. How was Amelia's upbringing different from the other girls of the time? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Which flight changed Earhart's life forever?

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4. Why did she receive the Distinguished Flying Cross from Congress?

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5. How did Amelia help other women of that time?

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6. Where did Mrs. Earhart's flight disappear in 1937?

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