

It's Her Story: Amelia Earhart — A Graphic Novel



TEACHER'S NOTES

Amelia Earhart was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean. She piloted many record-breaking flights, became an author, advised engineers, taught college students, and defended women's rights. And then, somewhere in the South Pacific, she disappeared on an attempted flight around the world.

It's Her Story: Amelia Earhart

Written by Kim Moldofsky

Illustrated by Alan Brown

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Ages 7 to 10

48 pages

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DISCUSSION

Ask these questions to the class as a whole or have students discuss in small groups.

1. When Amelia was stopped from doing something because of her gender, she often worked to change things for all women. Find some examples in the book. What character traits and skills helped her succeed? How can working to help a group be more effective than just trying to help yourself?
2. Find some idioms (figures of speech that don't make sense when taken literally) in the book. (Sample answers: cat's meow, horsefeathers, bee's knees, in a pickle, applesauce, crackerjack.) Do we still use these sayings? What are some idioms in use today?
3. Amelia believed that "Adventure is worthwhile in itself" (p. 44). What are the required components of an adventure—for example, can you have one in your own community? Does it have to be unsafe? Why might an adventure be worthwhile in itself?

MATH AND SCIENCE CONNECTION

On p. 21, Amelia and her crew lose radio contact and the clouds prevent them from seeing visual landmarks. They had to guess when they were near their target of Ireland. In this activity, the class will work together to practice the type of guesswork Amelia and her crew would have made (pilots call this process "dead reckoning").

1. Introduce the equation distance = speed * time ($d = s*t$). Tell students they will use a walking speed of 175 feet per minute (2 mph). (Note: If your results in Step 5 are off, try adjusting this number.)
2. Decide together on a distance to estimate, such as the school perimeter.
3. Walk the planned distance together; measure the time it takes using a stopwatch. (For simplicity, silently choose one student to clock from start to finish.)
4. Once back in the classroom, work through the equation $d = s*t$ together.
5. As a class, check your results for accuracy by measuring the distance using mapping software, a wristband tracker, or building blueprints. Use mismatches to yield fruitful discussion about the importance of starting with an accurate constant (walking speed), repeating trials, and the effects of stairs, hills, weather, and wind.

GEOGRAPHY CONNECTION

Amelia Earhart and her flying partners would plan carefully for their flights, charting a course over land and sea that could keep them safe and allow them to rest and refuel. In this activity, students will chart a course through their neighbourhood, school, or another area. Have students do the following:

1. Print out a satellite map of their neighbourhood using mapping software or draw a map of their neighbourhood or of the school. Help them add a compass rose.
2. As a class or individually, develop a legend to correspond to each of the following categories:
 - Landmarks: Eye-catching or well-known places
 - Places to “refuel”: Places they feel safe and comfortable, such as a friend’s home, a special tree, or the library
 - Areas for exploration: Places they can learn, discover, or satisfy their curiosity
3. Label their map’s features using the legend developed in Step 2.
4. Mark a route on their map that passes by at least three landmarks, two places to refuel, and one area for exploration.
5. Write directions through their route using the features and cardinal directions as descriptors. Older students can include distances between features using pacing (“walk 20 steps”) or dead reckoning (see activity above).

Consider making students’ maps more permanent, so they can chart different courses. For example, they can put maps in clear sheet protectors (or you can laminate them); routes can be drawn and redrawn with dry-erase or overhead markers. Or incorporate geometry and other STEAM skills by having students glue their maps to a piece of corrugated cardboard sufficient to insert pushpins, and then chart courses using pushpins and yarn or string.

