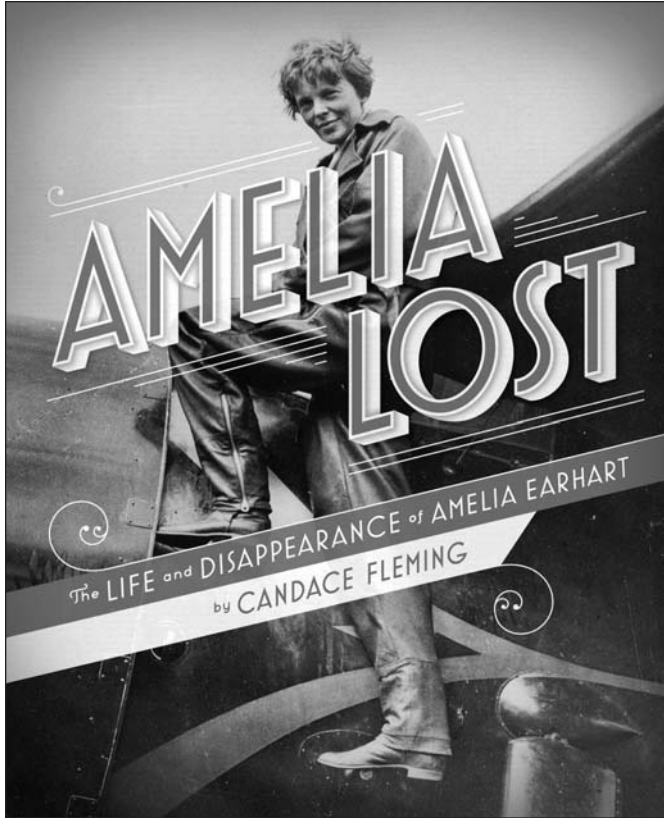


BOOKNOTES

educators guide



Schwartz & Wade Books HC: 978-0-375-84198-9
GLB: 978-0-375-94598-4

ABOUT THE BOOK

Product endorsements, worldwide exposure, lucrative book deals, and even a signature hairstyle: one could only be describing the latest celebrity “It Girl.” But in this case, one must travel back to the late 1920s to discover the girl in question wasn’t just another pretty face, but the legendary pilot Amelia Earhart. While many of today’s celebrities are famous for nothing more than good looks and a great publicist, Amelia Earhart was the real deal. As a pilot and role model for women, Earhart was one of the 20th century’s first female American icons. In *Amelia Lost: The Life and Disappearance of Amelia Earhart*, author Candace Fleming offer readers an intimate look into the life of the world’s most famous aviatrix, how she helped create the concept of celebrity, and how her adventures and disappearance over the Pacific in 1937 still fascinate people to this day. With chapters that alternate between Earhart’s biography and the events surrounding her disappearance, *Amelia Lost* captures the spirit of the woman who “dared to live.”

THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

Fame & Celebrity • Adventure
Gender Equality & Roles of Women
Identity

GRADES 3-7

“[Amelia Earhart] helped the cause of women by giving them a feeling that there was nothing they could not do.”

—Eleanor Roosevelt

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

In the preface of *Amelia Lost*, Candace Fleming writes, “It is often difficult to find the history in the hype, to separate truth from myth.” Write this quote on the board and spend time discussing what students believe it to mean. Challenge students to offer examples of historical or contemporary figures who could be considered cultural icons. (Examples might include George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Marilyn Monroe, Martin Luther King, Jr., The Beatles, Michael Jordan, Lady Gaga). Create a columnar list of the names, plus two additional columns: one labeled *Truth*, and the other labeled *Myth*. Place students in small groups and ask them to write at least one fact about each person as well as one mythlike assumption that has grown up around the person’s celebrity. After students complete the activity, gather for a whole class discussion, examining the difficulties they encountered in separating “truth from myth.”

THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

FAME & CELEBRITY

Amelia Earhart was one of the first female heroes of the 20th century. Her exploits and adventures made her a living legend, and after her death, a cultural icon. How did Amelia work to cultivate her public image, or as her husband George Putnam put it, take “an active role in mythologizing her own life.” (p. viii) Study the photo of Earhart on page 52 and compare it to the image of Charles Lindbergh on page 47. How were Earhart’s physical similarities to Lindbergh “an added bonus”? (p. 50) Why did her publicity team deliberately dress her to resemble Lindbergh? What benefits did this strategy provide? What were the advantages of referring to Earhart as “Lady Lindy”?

ADVENTURE

Earhart once said about flying that “the danger made it all the more thrilling.” (p. 33) How did her taste for risk, speed, and danger both help and hurt her? As a student pilot, her first instructor noted that Earhart was “wholly confident.” (p. 37) How, in Earhart’s case, was her confidence both an asset and a liability?

Just weeks before her flight around the equator, Earhart’s busy schedule and time management choices kept her from properly learning how to operate her plane’s radio equipment. How do you think her decision not to devote time to such a vital piece of her plane’s communications system may have played a role in her disappearance? Why was this her “gravest mistake”? (p. 92)



GENDER EQUALITY & ROLES OF WOMEN

Discuss Amelia Earhart’s role and contribution in advancing women’s rights, the role of women in the workplace, and ultimately, feminism. Discuss Earhart’s early feminist views, characterized by her statement, “The rules of female conduct bewildered and annoyed [me].” (p. 8) Discuss the existence of gender inequalities in Earhart’s time, and how these compare to those that exist in the world today.

Earhart once said, “There are a great many boys who would be better off making pies, and a great many girls who would be better off as mechanics.” (p. 83) Discuss the concept of gender roles and how this comment might have been received in 1935. Why was this a bold statement to make for the time?

IDENTITY

Reread the top half of page 6, and discuss the meaning of Earhart’s statement that she could see “certain threads . . . leading me to airplanes.”

What does the image of threads mean? What are your “threads”? How can one take a passion and turn it into a fulfilling career?

What character/personality traits did Earhart exhibit from an early age that benefited her as a pilot? What character/personality traits did she exhibit that may have contributed to her disappearance?

CONNECTING TO THE CURRICULUM

SCIENCE

After Amelia Earhart's disappearance over the Pacific Ocean, the crew of the *Itasca* utilized state-of-the-art technology in their attempt to locate Earhart's plane. They also used Morse Code to send her messages, thinking her radio transmitter might be malfunctioning. Give students time online and in the library to research the above technology. Students should present a short report on their findings. (Have students reread page 17 and challenge them to create a secret message in Morse Code.)

SOCIAL STUDIES

On page 28 the author describes how Earhart created a career scrapbook that she called "Activities of Women." Of the women she researched, she noted on the last page of the scrapbook, "Such free and fascinating lives they must live." (p. 28) Give students time to research careers and the people who are leaders in fields of interest to them. Students can present their work in a creative way, such as a poster, a PowerPoint presentation, or like Earhart, in a scrapbook.

Have students reread the section called "Celebrity." (pp. 57–61.) Discuss the statement made by a historian that "She was completely committed to the commercial property 'Amelia Earhart,' and was absolutely driven to make it a recognized name brand." (p. 58) Have students form two groups to debate the benefits and pitfalls of turning oneself into a name brand. Students should consider both what people gain (wealth, fame, attention) as well as what they sacrifice (privacy, a "normal" life).

One way in which the public learned about Amelia Earhart's adventures was by watching the newsreels that appeared as part of the bill at the local movie house. Have students research the

prevalence and importance of the newsreel in 1930s America. Give students time online to find and view old newsreels from the 1930s.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Throughout *Amelia Lost*, the author uses quoted statements and excerpts from Earhart's writing to help define her as a person. Many of these statements are referenced in the Thematic Connections section of this guide. Gather together a selection of Earhart's quotes from the book, as well as those found on the official Amelia Earhart website (www.ameliaearhart.com/about/quotes.html). Have students choose a quote that they find interesting or inspirational, and use it as the basis of a personal essay. Students should present what the quote means to them and why they feel it is important. Allow students time to read their essays aloud to the class.

ART

As part of a unit on accomplishments of American women, work with the art teacher to create a variety of works that celebrate the life of Amelia Earhart. Students can create works on paper, murals, three-dimensional pieces such as sculpture or collage, or a digital presentation. Use information from *Amelia Lost* to help students generate ideas for content. Create a public exhibition space in the school so all students can view and learn from the finished art works.

VOCABULARY | USE OF LANGUAGE

Ask students to write down unfamiliar words or phrases and try to define them by taking clues from the context of the sentences.

Such words or phrases may include:

p. 7	precocious	p. 52	haphazard	p. 61	pragmatic	p. 100	navigator
p. 8	deportment	p. 53	flying blind	p. 61	apostle	p. 105	terminated
p. 39	publicity	p. 57	overnight celebrity	p. 61	vagabond	p. 106	tidbit
p. 51	instigate	p. 57	frenzied	p. 67	unwieldy	p. 108	distraught
p. 52	contemplating	p. 58	hoopla	p. 94	bullheadedness		
p. 52	peril	p. 60	aviatrix	p. 95	tarmac		



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Candace Fleming said, "I have always been a storyteller. Even before I could write my name, I could tell a good tale." She is the award-winning author of many picture books and novels. In addition to *Amelia Lost*, her other historical biographies include *The Great and Only Barnum: The Tremendous, Stupendous Life of Showman P. T. Barnum* and *The Lincolns: A Scrapbook Look at Abraham and Mary*. Candace Fleming resides outside of Chicago. Learn more at CandaceFleming.com.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Amelia Earhart: The Official Website

www.ameliaearhart.com

The Ninety-Nines, Inc.

International Organization of Women Pilots

www.ninety-nines.org

The Museum of Flight

www.museumofflight.org/amelia

Purdue University Library

www.lib.purdue.edu/spcol/aeahart

ON THE WEB

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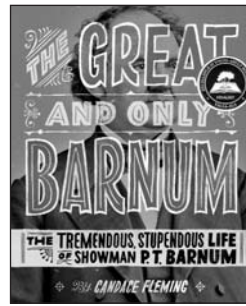
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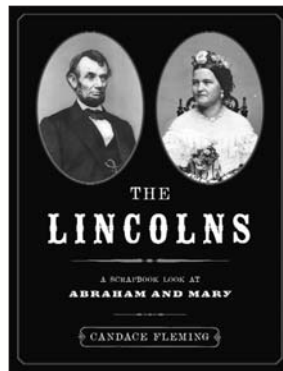


The Great and Only Barnum The Tremendous, Stupendous Life of Showman P. T. Barnum

Candace Fleming
Illustrated by Ray Fenwick

Grades 3-7
Biography & Autobiography

Schwartz & Wade Books HC: 978-0-375-84197-2
GLB: 978-0-375-94597-7



The Lincolns: A Scrapbook Look at Abraham and Mary

Candace Fleming

Grades 5-9
Biography & Autobiography

Schwartz & Wade Books HC: 978-0-375-83618-3
GLB: 978-0-375-93618-0



Sky High: The True Story of Maggie Gee

Marissa Moss
Illustrated by Carl Angel

Grades 1-3
Aeronautics; Biography & Autobiography; Girls & Women

Tricycle Press HC: 978-1-58246-280-6