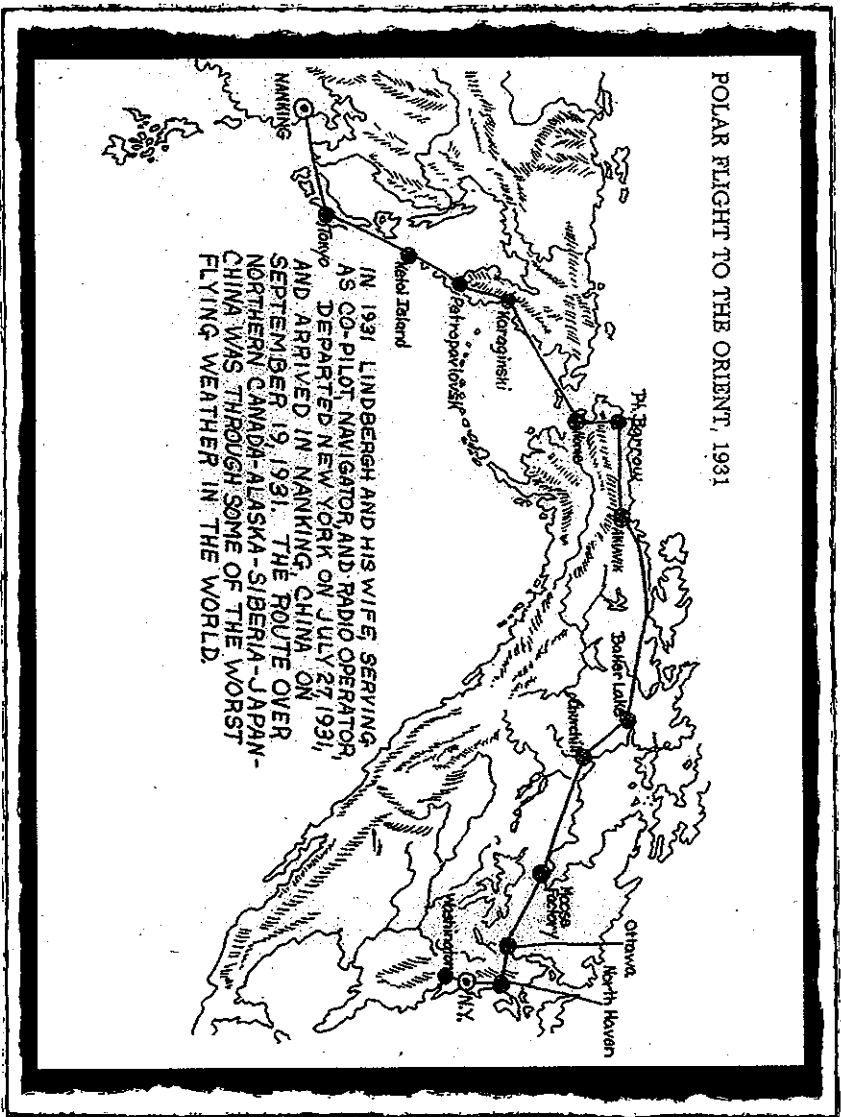


# ANNIE & CHARLES LINDBERGH Opening the Skies



A map showing the route the Lindberghs followed from New York City to Nanking, China

**H**e was the most famous person in the world. She was the daughter of the American ambassador to Mexico. In 1927, he became the first pilot to fly nonstop across the Atlantic Ocean, traveling from New York to Paris. She knew nothing about airplanes or flying. He loved cars, planes—anything that went fast. She loved books and hoped one day to become a writer. Charles and Anne Lindbergh seemed to have little in common. Yet together they wrote some of the most important pages in the history of aviation.

<sup>2</sup> Anne and Charles married in 1929. Charles made it clear from the beginning that he did not want his wife to sit at home while he was off flying. If they were going to be married, they were going to be a team. Anne would have to learn to use Morse Code and to operate a two-way radio. She would also have to learn how to navigate. She did all of that gladly. Wherever Charles decided to fly, Anne was prepared to be right there in the cockpit with him.

<sup>3</sup> In 1931, the Lindberghs got their first big opportunity to work together. Charles, who was a technical consultant for Pan American Airways, was contacted by Juan Trippe, the company's founder. Trippe asked the Lindberghs to survey an air

route from the United States to Asia. The route was a great circle route. A great circle route is the shortest distance between two points on the earth's surface. This particular route ran over Canada, across Alaska, and down to Japan and China. It was the shortest distance between the east coast of North America and the Orient.

4 No one had ever flown the route before, and many pilots doubted that it could be done. Pilots familiar with the Arctic urged Charles and Anne not to try it. They pointed out the dangerous weather conditions that prevailed along the route. Storms and fog sprang up without warning. There were no landing strips, supply stations, or refueling pads along the way. For much of the trip the Lindberghs would be out of radio contact with the rest of the world. And near the North Pole the pull from the magnetic pole would make their compass worthless.

5 The Lindberghs listened as the pilots ran down the list of dangers. But in the end they decided to make the attempt anyway. Charles, eager for new challenges, believed that if they planned the trip carefully enough they could make it. Once that decision was made, he and Anne began preparing for the journey.

6 To begin with, they bought the best plane available. It was a seaplane, which meant it was equipped with pontoons for

water landings. With a top speed of 185 miles per hour, it was one of the fastest planes of its day. When the Lindberghs saw the plane, they decided to name it *Sirius*, after the brightest star in the sky.

7 The sleek black and red *Sirius* could carry enough gasoline to travel 2,000 miles. The total mileage of the trip, however, was more than 8,000 miles. The Lindberghs, therefore, had to arrange for fuel tanks to be set out along the route.

Next they had to decide what supplies to take with them. They packed repair kits and emergency medical supplies. They took parachutes in case they had to abandon the plane. They packed handguns so they could shoot animals if they ran out of food. They brought along matches, rope, and a rubber raft. They even packed special flight suits that could be heated by electricity to ward off the Arctic cold.

8 By July 29, 1931, the Lindberghs were ready. They took off from College Point, Long Island, in New York, and landed in Maine, where they stopped briefly to visit family. From there they went to Ottawa, Canada. On August 1, they left Ottawa and started northwest across the continent. The first part of the trip went smoothly. With Charles at the controls and Anne working the radio, they made good progress. Each day they flew farther

and farther north. Each night they landed on a river or lake and dropped anchor. For the first week it seemed that all the dangers they had been warned about were imaginary. But on August 8, as they approached Point Barrow in northern Alaska, things began to go wrong.

9 First they hit a fog so dense that they could see nothing but fine white mist all around them. They managed to land



Anne Morrow Lindbergh and Charles Lindbergh

safely at Point Barrow, but there they found bad news awaiting them. The gasoline they had ordered had not yet reached the tiny coastal town. They had no way to refuel. After discussing the situation, Anne and Charles decided to keep going, rather than wait for the fuel to reach them. Charles figured the *Sirius* had just enough fuel left to make it to Nome, Alaska.

<sup>10</sup> On the afternoon of August 11, the Lindberghs left Point Barrow and headed southwest toward the small mining town of Nome. They expected it would take about seven hours to get there. Ordinarily they would not have left so late in the day. They didn't want to get caught flying at night over unfamiliar territory. But this time they did not worry. It was summertime and they were in the Arctic. They were sure that the summer sun never set in that part of the world.

<sup>11</sup> But Charles and Anne were wrong about the sun. It was true that the Arctic sky never got very dark in June. But this was August. Besides, the Lindberghs were flying south, away from the land of endless summer light. By 8:00 p.m. it was clear that the sun was going down. By 8:30 it had gotten so dark that Anne could barely read the note her husband handed her. The message read, "What time does it get dark in Nome?"

<sup>12</sup> Quickly Anne went to work on the radio. She had to contact Nome. She needed to find out if there would be enough daylight left for them to land on the Nome River as planned. They were

still almost two hours from Nome, and the *Sirius* was running low on gas. They didn't have the time or the fuel to look for another landing spot.

<sup>13</sup> The radio operator in Nome sent back a message that was not encouraging. It was already getting dark there. The radio operator offered to put flares out along the Nome River, but still the Lindberghs would be landing in the dark.

<sup>14</sup> Both Charles and Anne knew that they should not do that. It was simply too dangerous. They didn't know the exact width, depth, or contour of the river. If they tried to land there in the dark, they might injure themselves or the plane. They decided to make a forced landing somewhere and wait until morning to fly into Nome. They had to hurry; it was getting darker every second. Anne radioed Nome to tell the radio operator their plan. Then Charles sent the plane plunging through the clouds and mist toward an ocean inlet. Somehow he managed to land the *Sirius* safely in the small patch of calm water. Not until the plane had landed did the Lindberghs realize the water in the inlet was only three feet deep.

<sup>15</sup> The next morning, recovered from their close call, Charles and Anne continued their journey. They stopped briefly in Nome to refuel the *Sirius*. As they traveled farther along their course, they ran into many other frightening situations. At one point the fog became incredibly thick. In order to see anything at all, they had to fly up and down the sides of mountains, very close to treetops

and rocky ledges. Terrified, Anne felt sure they were going to crash. To her, it seemed the plane had suddenly become "like a knife going down the side of a pie tin, between fog and mountains." At another point, bad weather forced them to fly so low that the *Sirius* actually did skip across the treetops. In the course of the trip, they made three emergency landings.

<sup>16</sup> Despite all the difficulties, however, on September 19, 1931, the Lindberghs landed in China. That ended their long and dangerous journey. They had successfully flown where no one else had dared to go. They had proved that it was possible to fly the great circle route from New York to the Orient. In the years that followed, the Lindberghs went on to pioneer other air routes. By the time their flying careers ended, Charles and Anne Lindbergh had changed the way people looked at aviation. 🌩

*If you have been timed while reading this article, enter your reading time below. Then turn to the Words-per-Minute Table on page 135 and look up your reading speed (words per minute). Enter your reading speed on the graph on page 134.*

### Reading Time: Lesson 10

Minutes

Seconds

**A Finding the Main Idea**

One statement below expresses the main idea of the article. One statement is too general, or too broad. The other statement explains only part of the article; it is too narrow. Label the statements using the following key:

M—Main Idea      B—Too Broad      N—Too Narrow

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Charles and Anne Lindbergh met with great difficulties as they flew across Alaska.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Charles and Anne Lindbergh were among the world's greatest aviation pioneers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Charles and Anne Lindbergh were the first aviators to fly the dangerous great circle route from New York to the Orient.

\_\_\_\_\_ Score 15 points for a correct M answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Score 5 points for each correct B or N answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score: Finding the Main Idea

**B Recalling Facts**

How well do you remember the facts in the article? Put an X in the box next to the answer that correctly completes each statement about the article.

1. Anne Lindbergh's early desire was to become a
  - a. pilot.
  - b. radio operator.
  - c. writer.
2. *Sirius*, the Lindberghs' plane, was named after
  - a. the brightest star in the sky.
  - b. a city in China.
  - c. the founder of Pan American Airways.
3. The Lindberghs were running out of both gas and daylight on their way to
  - a. Nome, Alaska.
  - b. Point Barrow, Alaska.
  - c. Ottawa, Canada.
4. The greatest danger the Lindberghs faced while flying to Nome was
  - a. an Arctic storm.
  - b. approaching darkness.
  - c. a useless compass.
5. The ocean inlet that the Lindberghs were forced to land on was only
  - a. three inches deep.
  - b. three feet deep.
  - c. six inches deep.

Score 5 points for each correct answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score: Recalling Facts

**C Making Inferences**

When you combine your own experience and information from a text to draw a conclusion that is not directly stated in that text, you are making an inference. Below are five statements that may or may not be inferences based on information in the article. Label the statements using the following key:

C—Correct Inference      F—Faulty Inference

1. Anne Lindbergh would not have become an important pioneer in aviation if she had not married Charles Lindbergh.
2. The survey of the great circle route from New York to China was the first dangerous flight Charles Lindbergh had ever made.
3. The Lindberghs would not have found themselves in such dangerous situations if they had planned their trip more carefully.
4. The Lindbergh's flight from New York to the Orient helped to open up the skies for the growing business of aviation.
5. The great circle route across the Arctic is still a difficult and dangerous route to fly.

Score 5 points for each correct answer.

Total Score: Making Inferences

**D Using Words Precisely**

Each numbered sentence below contains an underlined word or phrase from the article. Following the sentence are three definitions. One definition is closest to the meaning of the underlined word. One definition is opposite or nearly opposite. Label those two definitions using the following key. Do not label the remaining definition.

C—Closest      O—Opposite or Nearly Opposite

1. Trippé asked the Lindberghs to survey an air route from the United States to Asia.
  - a. alter
  - b. avoid
  - c. explore
2. Charles, eager for new challenges, believed that if they planned the trip carefully enough, they could make it.
  - a. anxious
  - b. lazy
  - c. uninterested
3. They even packed special flight suits heated by electricity to ward off the Arctic cold.
  - a. attract
  - b. keep away
  - c. heat up

4. They decided to make a forced landing somewhere and wait until morning to fly into Nome.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. violent
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. unnecessary
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. required

5. Then Charles sent the plane plunging through the clouds and mist toward an ocean inlet.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. flying
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. diving headlong
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. rising straight up

\_\_\_\_\_ Score 3 points for each correct C answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ Score 2 points for each correct O answer.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Total Score: Using Words Precisely**

Enter the four total scores in the spaces below, and add them together to find your Reading Comprehension Score. Then record your score on the graph on page 135.

Score _____	Question Type	Lesson 10
_____	Highlighting the Main Idea	
_____	Recalling Facts	
_____	Making Inferences	
_____	Using Words Precisely	
_____	Reading Comprehension Score	

### Author's Approach

Put an X in the box next to the correct answer.

1. The main purpose of the first paragraph is to
  - a. inform the reader about the history of aviation.
  - b. emphasize the similarities between Anne and Charles Lindbergh.
  - c. emphasize the differences between Anne and Charles Lindbergh.

2. Which of the following statements from the article best describes the Lindberghs?

- a. "If they were going to be married, they were going to be a team."
- b. "Charles and Anne Lindbergh seemed to have little in common."
- c. "With Charles at the controls and Anne working the radio, they made good progress."

3. The author probably wrote this article in order to

- a. relate the love story between Charles and Anne Lindbergh.
- b. describe the dangerous conditions of their flight to Asia.
- c. tell readers about the Lindberghs' impact on aviation.

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of correct answers

Record your personal assessment of your work on the Critical Thinking Chart on page 136.