

BETWEEN THE LINES

Use your inferential skills to look for clues about what is happening in these scenes.

Rajeev kicked his neighbour's fence. He smacked the top of his head. He could see Mrs Collins staring from her kitchen window with that look on her face. She glanced at the broken heads of her daffodils and Reg, her Alsatian, a chain attached to its collar, sitting a few feet away from the football in the middle of her perfect lawn.

"So what are you waiting for?" said Meena, Rajeev's sister.

"Yeah," said his friend, Tom. "You can climb the fence. Look! Reg isn't going anywhere."

Rajeev sighed and directed Tom's gaze to the other end of the dog's chain.

1. What has happened?

2. How do you know?

3. Do you think that this is something that has happened before?

4. What makes you think that?

5. How do you know Mrs Collins is a keen gardener?

6. How do you know Meena and Tom don't think it is their problem?

7. Why does Rajeev point to the other end of the dog's chain?

Jason slammed the door behind him, dropped his jacket and kicked it into the corner, threw his homework across the living-room floor and headed for the fridge. As his mother would be home late from office, he spent the evening on the sofa with his feet on a tower of homework books, a slowly diminishing pizza balanced on his stomach and the TV remote in his hand. His mother found him there fast asleep at 10:30pm.

The following day meant another late shift for his mother. So, when he let himself in, the first thing he did was retrieve the pizza box from the day before, fold his school report inside it, and shove to the bottom of the bin in the shed. Then he went to the kitchen in order to cook his mother's favourite supper.

1. How is Jason feeling when he returns home from school?

2. How do you know how he is feeling?

3. Do you think Jason's school report is good one?

4. Why do you think this?

5. How do you think Jason's report turned out the way it did?

6. Why does Jason prepare his mother's favourite supper?

Jess stood in the doorway of their country cottage, not quite outside in the sharp air where, a week ago, there would have been sound of cattle waiting to be milked; nor inside beside the familiar warmth of the stove. Mum and Dad and her brother, Ben, loaded the van. Ben glared at her as he pushed past her for another chest full of books. She caught his disapproval, but she didn't care. Her friends at school had all said that London would be an adventure and they promised to try to organise a get-together. She sighed, unable to move. It was almost as if she were paralysed.

1. What time of year do you think it is?

2. Why do you think this?

3. What sort of work have her parents been involved in up to now?

4. What evidence is there to support your answer?

5. What is happening?

6. How do you know?

7. What is Ben thinking?

8. How does Jess feel about what is going on?

9. Jess doesn't expect to see her friends again. How do you know?

QUEEN OF THE AIR

*Amelia Earhart: first woman
to fly solo across the Atlantic.*

Born – 24 July 1897

Disappeared – 2 July 1937



Amelia Earhart, an American, experienced her first close encounter with an aeroplane at the Iowa State Fair. She was ten years old and described it as: ‘... a thing of rusty wire and wood and not at all interesting.’

Almost ten years later, while at a stunt-flying exhibition, an airborne pilot spotted Amelia and a friend, standing away from the rest of the crowd. He swooped down towards them, possibly hoping to make them run, but Amelia stood her ground. Later in life, she said: ‘I did not understand it at the time, but I believe that little red airplane [aeroplane] said something to me as it swished by.’

On 28 December 1920, pilot Frank Hawks took her up in an aeroplane for the first time. ‘By the time I had got two or three hundred feet off the ground, I knew I had to fly.’

As a child, Amelia stayed with her grandmother during school term. In spite of her grandmother’s disapproval – common in those days – Amelia spent much of her time outdoors, climbing trees, riding imaginary horses and hunting. Later, in high school, she was described as:

A.E. – the girl in brown who walks alone.

On 3 January 1921, she took her first flying lesson. She worked hard for six months and saved enough money to buy her first, small aircraft: a two-seater biplane painted bright yellow, which she called *The Canary*.

A few years later, she was invited to join two other pilots to fly across the Atlantic. They left Newfoundland and landed in Wales 21 hours later. She became an international celebrity.

Then a new secret project presented itself – the opportunity to fly the same route completely single-handed. The news soon got out and on 20 May, 1932, she took off for Paris, but icy conditions and strong winds forced her to land in a farmer’s field in Londonderry, Ireland. At a time when even a car was a novelty, one can only imagine how excited the local people must have felt to see her land her plane.

Approaching her 40th birthday, she decided to be the first woman to fly round the world. By 29 June 1937, with her navigator, Fred Noonan, she reached New Guinea, having completed 22,000 of the 29,000 mile journey. A few days later, running into cloud and heavy rain, and with broken and irregular radio guidance from a ship in the area, her last message was: ‘We must be on you, but we cannot see you. Fuel is running low. Been unable to reach you by radio. We are flying at 1,000 feet. We are running north and south.’ Nothing more was heard from her.

Now use evidence from the text to answer the following questions.

1. What, in the introduction to the text, suggests that we don't know precisely when Amelia Earhart died.

2. Amelia wasn't impressed when she first had a close-up view of an aeroplane. How do we know?

3. What experience, described by Amelia, tells you that, even as a child, she was brave and not easily scared?

4. Why might her grandmother have disapproved of Amelia spending so much of her time outdoors?

5. How do we know Amelia had trouble making friends at school?

6. What phrase tells you that her second Atlantic crossing was done on her own?

7. Why would the local people in Ireland be so excited about Amelia landing there?

8. What made flying so difficult on the last leg of the round-the-world flight?
