

Name \_\_\_\_\_ **Central Ideas of Text**

## What Happened to Amelia Earhart?



People have never stopped speculating about why living legend Amelia Earhart and her navigator, Fred Noonan, disappeared over the Pacific Ocean on the second of June, 1937, while attempting a round-the-world-flight. Their disappearance launched the largest and most expensive air and sea search in American History, but neither Earhart, Noonan or the plane were found. Another search privately funded by Earhart's husband, George Putnam, was also unsuccessful, and Earhart was declared legally dead in January 1939. According to the official report, Earhart and Noonan had been unable to locate their destination, Howland Island, ran out of fuel, crashed into the water and sank. Many hypotheses have been made; some backed by plausible scientific evidence, others not. For instance, some have used Earhart's close relationship with Franklin D. and Eleanor Roosevelt to suggest that she was actually a spy for the U.S. government. Others have suggested that Earhart and Noonan landed on one of the Japanese-occupied islands of the Pacific and were taken prisoner. Still others believe that Earhart didn't die at all, but returned to the U.S., changed her name, and lived the rest of a long, healthy life in obscurity.

But by far the most compelling hypothesis is that they landed on a South Pacific island called Nikumaroro; at the time of their disappearance, this island was uninhabited and was known as Gardner Island. The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (TIGHAR) has launched the Earhart Project, with a goal of investigating the Nikumaroro hypothesis. Since 1989, this group has been searching the island, assembling found artifacts that include improvised tools, shoe remnants and aircraft wreckage that is consistent with Earhart's Electra. Additionally they have discovered that several years after Earhart's disappearance, a British colonial officer found the skeletal remains of a human on Nikumaroro. The bones were sent to Fiji for analysis but were ultimately lost. The most compelling evidence for the Nikumaroro theory was uncovered during TIGHAR's expedition to the island in 2010: at a spot where they had previously determined there had been a campfire, they found pieces of a pocketknife, shells that had been cut open, fragments of a glass cosmetic jar, bits of makeup and bone fragments that might be human. The hope is that DNA technology can finally confirm what happened to Amelia Earhart and Fred Noonan.

1. What is the central idea of the article? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What evidence is presented to support the central idea? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What evidence is presented to support the Nikumaroro theory? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_