

The First Flyers

CCSSR2: Figure out ideas when you read.

Long ago, there were no airplanes. People had wanted to fly. But they did not know how to make a plane. Many people tried to invent something. But they failed.

Two brothers did it. They invented the first plane. They were named Orville and Wilbur Wright. When they told people they were working on the invention of a machine that would fly, people laughed. They were used to the brother's ideas. They thought they were foolish.

The Wright Brothers said that the first time they thought about flying was when their father brought a toy home. He wanted them to be great thinkers. He had many books. He encouraged them to read a lot. But he also wanted them to be creative. So he brought them interesting toys. One of those toys started them on the way to flying. It was a toy helicopter. It wasn't really a helicopter. It was a twirling machine. The brothers spent hours playing with it. They never stopped thinking about flying after that. It would be their way to make a big difference. They would change how people traveled.

The two brothers were mechanics. They worked with bicycles. They worked with engines, too. But engines are heavy. So people thought they would not be able to make a plane that would fly.

Wilbur and Orville opened a bicycle shop. They fixed bicycles. They kept thinking how they could make a flying machine. When people came to their shop, they would see drawings and models. They would see their idea of how to make a flying machine. The brothers worked many hours. They lived simply. They used the money they made to buy things for their planes.

They made model planes. They made full-size gliders, too. Those are planes without engines, they just float. To use a glider you need to have good wind to hold the plane in the air.

It was dangerous to fly even a glider. It would be very dangerous to fly a machine with an engine. Most people thought they would not be able to do it. Their family worried. But they did it. They were the first people in the world to make that flying machine. Today hundreds of planes fly thousands of miles every day. Those flights started with the Wright brothers.

What is the main idea of this passage?

How do you know? Underline five sentences that help you know the main idea.