

The poster features a vintage-style map background with labels like 'TERRE DE LABRIDOR', 'PARTIE D'AFRIQUE', and 'OAHU'. The central image shows a man in a flight helmet looking forward, with a biplane flying in the sky below him. The bottom of the poster shows a man in a long coat standing on a snowy field with mountains in the background.

WINGS OF COURAGE

A TRUE STORY OF PIONEER AVIATION

A Teacher's Resource Guide

Large Poster Included

WINGS OF COURAGE Synopsis

Based on a True Story of Pioneer Aviation



Director: Jean-Jacques Annaud

Screenplay: Alain Godard

& Jean-Jacques Annaud

Filmed in IMAX® 3D

Starring: Craig Sheffer, Tom Hulce,
Elizabeth McGovern, and Val Kilmer

The year is 1930. Henri Guillaumet, his wife Noëlle, and their little dog, Loop de Loop, make their way down a street in Buenos Aires, Argentina. They hesitate for a moment at a cafe doorway, then enter to keep their meeting with Antoine de Saint-Exupéry and the eminent pilot Jean Mermoz. Saint-Exupéry, the Chief of Operations at Aéropostale—the French airmail company—is also a noted author and a courageous pilot in his own right. Mermoz is an aviation trail blazer, and tales of his courage and flamboyance have made him a well-recognized hero. Having conquered the Sahara and the Andes, Mermoz is about to blaze an airmail route over the Atlantic.

Henri is applying for the job that Mermoz is leaving—flying the mail between Santiago, Chile and Buenos Aires. At first, Mermoz is skeptical of Henri's ability to handle the task. The route over the Andes is tricky and dangerous, Mermoz warns, "You can't land! If you drop, you'll never be found again. Remember the local saying, 'The Andes don't give men back.' Never." Antoine de Saint-Exupéry intercedes for Henri, praising his past aviation achievements. Noëlle, fearful of the danger, but fully aware of how much Henri wants the job, remains bravely supportive.

Henri secures the job and joins the company of courageous Aéropostale pilots. One morning, true to the company motto, *Le Courrier Est Plus Important Que La Vie* (The mail is more important than life), Henri takes off in very threatening weather. A tremendous storm causes his crash-landing on a frozen lake in a remote region of the snow-covered Andes. Henri's hope for rescue holds steady through the night and soars the next morning when he hears the engine hum of a search plane. Hope then turns to numbing despair when the plane fails to notice his emergency flares. With no prospects of rescue, but courage intact, Henri safely stores the mail, notes the coordinates of the plane, and decides to leave the mountain range on foot.

For five days and four nights, Henri courageously carries on his trek, struggling through waist-deep snow and freezing temperatures. With each passing hour his condition deteriorates, but through sheer strength of will, he continues to drag onward, even though each step is torture. Finally, fighting sleep, cold, hunger, and despair, Henri falters. He argues aloud with dream-like visions of his wife and his comrades. He begs Saint-Exupéry's forgiveness for his failure to get the mail through, and asks Noëlle for permission to give up and die. The desire to rest by surrendering to death is strong but proves no match for his love of Noëlle and his devotion to duty. Henri keeps walking. At last he stumbles onto a mountain path and collapses. Henri is found by a peasant woman, and eventually reunites with Saint-Exupéry and Deley, the stopover chief. Henri immediately telephones Noëlle with news of his homecoming.

Ten days later, Henri is back on duty for Aéropostale—flying the mail over the Andes.



Summary of Student Activities

| Activity Sheet | Core Concept | Student Objectives | Curriculum Focus | Take Off! Activity |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| Pre-viewing Activity: Predictions and Questions | (Assess students' knowledge. Prepare students to learn.) | Formulate questions and predictions related to the film. | | |
| Mini Poster: 3D Movie Making | 3D film technology is based on the principles of human vision. | Explain IMAX® 3D film technology. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science • Technology | (Extension Activity) Replicate the process of creating a 3D image. |
| 1 Communication and Technology | Available technology and natural barriers influence human routes of travel. | Estimate distances on a map. Analyze challenges of pioneer air-mail delivery. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map Skills • Math • Geography • History | Choose an Aéropostale route, and write a descriptive flight log. |
| 2 Fixing Location | Locations on Earth are fixed by their relationship to imaginary lines. | Determine longitude and latitude of given map locations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map Skills • Science | Make a model astrolabe to determine approximate latitude. |
| 3 Seasons South of the Equator | Seasons change as the Earth revolves around the sun. | Explain why seasons in the N. and S. Hemispheres are always opposite each other. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science • Geography | Make a model to demonstrate the cause of seasonal change. |
| 4 How High Above What? | Pressure altimeters indicate how high an airplane is above sea level. | Explain the basic mechanism and use of the pressure altimeter. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math • Science • Technology | Make a model pressure altimeter to test changes in air pressure. |
| 5 Why Do Planes Fly? | Four main forces—thrust, lift, drag, and gravity—govern flight. | Describe the four forces that govern flight. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Science • Technology | Demonstrate lift by blowing over a paper strip. |
| 6 Antoine de Saint-Exupéry | The point of view in a story is the character through whose eyes the events are seen. | Analyze writing for viewpoint. Write in a prescribed voice. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature • Language Arts | Write a story in second person based on a real happening in a friend's or family member's life. |
| 7 I Am the Ant | Using visual comparisons is a good way to convey meaning quickly. | Distinguish between metaphors and similes. Interpret and create visual comparisons. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Arts | Write a one-page story about people performing a task. Use visual comparisons. |
| 8 Women Pilots, Aviation Pioneers | Women pilots played an important role in pioneer aviation. | Describe the roles of specific women who were aviation pioneers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History | Write a headline and article telling of an important flight by a woman aviation pioneer. |
| 9 Heroes and Advertising | Advertisements often have both open and hidden messages. | Analyze advertisements to identify hidden persuasive messages. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Skills | Clip and analyze advertisements aimed at young people. |
| 10 Courage, Risks, and Precautions | Decision making involves setting goals and evaluating options. Taking precautions can reduce risk. | Demonstrate the use of a decision-making model to analyze risks before making decisions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life Skills | Apply a decision-making model to analyze a real risk. |