

# VANISHED

## True Tales of Mysterious Disappearances

by Elizabeth MacLeod

**Genre:** Non-fiction, history

**Suitable for:** Grades 4 – 7

### Summary

Six compelling stories behind some of the world's most bewildering disappearances will keep readers on the edge of their seats. This irresistible combination of suspense and history also serves as an introduction to the advances in technology that may help discover what really happened in each unsolved mystery.

### THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITY IDEAS ...

... are only a start. There are many possibilities for helping students construct meaning from text.

- With a friend, write a conversation as if you are two of the settlers of the Lost Colony of Roanoke watching Governor White's ship disappear. Talk about how you feel and what your worries are for the future. Present your dialogue to the class—wear costumes if you can.
- Imagine you're the last living member of John Franklin's lost Arctic expedition. Write a letter describing how you feel about being alone and the fate of the rest of the crew.
- Find out more about some of the technologies described at the end of each chapter in the book.
- If you were making a film about the legendary ghost ship the *Mary Celeste*, what would the poster advertising the movie look like? Design a poster to encourage people to see your film.
- The Amber Room was just one of the many pieces of art that was stolen or went missing during World War II. Find out more about other vanished pieces of art, or about art that has been returned to its original owners. Have two sides debate the following: Be it resolved that the fairest thing to do with stolen art that has unwittingly been purchased by someone else is to return it to the original owners.

- Do you think the convicts who broke out of Alcatraz Prison survived their escape? Write a short play from the perspective that the convicts survived and how they were lost.
- If you could meet any of the people mentioned in this book, who would you like to meet and why? What would you ask him or her?
- Pretend you are one of the first television news reporters to arrive on the scene of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum art theft. File a report describing what has happened and what the police are doing to try to solve the crime.