

Leonardo Da Vinci. Leonardo Da Vinci was one of the great creative minds of the Italian Renaissance, hugely influential as an artist and sculptor but also immensely talented as an engineer, scientist and inventor. Leonardo da Vinci was born on 15 April 1452 near the Tuscan town of Vinci, the illegitimate son of a local lawyer. He was apprenticed to the sculptor and painter Andrea del Verrocchio in Florence and in 1478 became an independent master. In about 1483, he moved to Milan to work for the ruling Sforza family as an engineer, sculptor, painter and architect. Then, he produced the famous Madonna on the Rocks and The Last Supper which has been described as one of the greatest spiritual paintings. Unfortunately over the time the quality of the original painting has deteriorated despite frequent restoration attempts.

During his time in Florence, he painted several portraits, but the only one that survives is the famous 'Mona Lisa' (1503-1506). The Mona Lisa is one of the world's most famous and intriguing pictures. It is a portrait of a wife of a Florentine noble. For several days she came to Leonardo and sat for her portrait to be painted. However she refused to smile, Leonardo even tried hiring musicians but to no avail. One day just for a fleeting second she gave a faint smile and Leonardo was able to capture it. Her smile encapsulates a tremendous mysteriousness which is both fascinating and intriguing. In 1517, at the invitation of the French king Francis I, Leonardo moved to the Château of Cloux, near Amboise in France, where he died on 2 May 1519.

The fame of Da Vinci's surviving paintings has meant that he has been regarded primarily as an artist, but the thousands of surviving pages of his notebooks reveal the most eclectic and brilliant of minds. He wrote in left-handed mirror script and drew on subjects including geology, anatomy (which he studied in order to paint the human form more accurately), flight, gravity and optics. He 'invented' the bicycle, airplane, helicopter, and parachute some 500 years ahead of their time. Da Vinci's place as a pioneering scientist is beyond dispute. Yet his true genius was not as a scientist or an artist, but as a combination of the two: an 'artist-engineer'. His painting was scientific, based on a deep understanding of the workings of the human body and the physics of light and shade. His science was expressed through art, and his drawings and diagrams show what he meant, and how he understood the world to work.

Θέμα 1. Decide whether the following sentences are True (T) or False (F)

1. Leonardo da Vinci was immensely talented as an engineer,
scientist and inventor.
2. He was born on 15 April 1452 near the Venetian town of Vinci.
3. He studied to become a lawyer.
4. In 1478 he became an independent master.
5. During his time in Florence he painted the famous "Mona Lisa"
6. Mona Lisa is the portrait of a daughter of a Florentine noble.
7. Mona Lisa refused to smile even when Leonardo hired musicians
to cheer her up.
8. Leonardo da Vinci died in Italy.
9. He studied geology, anatomy, flight, gravity and optics.
10. His true genius was as a combination of artist & engineer.

Θέμα 2α Match column A with column B.

Influential
immensely
Illegitimate
Apprentice
Intriguing
Fleeting
Faint
Pioneer
Encapsulate
Dispute

Slight
Argument, conflict
Innovator
Brief
Fascinating, captivating
Enclose
Powerful, dominant
Immeasurably, hugely
Trainee
Illegal

Θέμα 2β From Active to Passive Voice.

1. An expert is restoring the antique car.

2. Steven Spielberg has directed a lot of successful films.

3. A number of reporters will meet the professor at the airport.

4. A nightmare woke Mary up.

5. Van Gogh painted "The Sunflowers"

6. Astronauts are exploring space.

7. A famous designer is going to redecorate the President's house.

8. They kill elephants for ivory.

9. The government will introduce new measures against animal testing.

10. She offered me a cup of tea.

