

LEONARDO DA VINCI

Leonardo da Vinci was born in a small town called Vinci in Italy in 1452. He is one of the most famous people in the history of the entire world. He was a great artist, -he was painter and sculptor- but he also was inventor, architect, engineer, philosopher and scientist.

He painted the Gioconda, known as the Mona Lisa, one of the most famous paintings of all time and the best-known painting in the world. The Mona Lisa is in the Louvre Museum in Paris. Millions of people come every year to see the Mona Lisa and her enigmatic smile although the identity of the woman is still a matter for debate.

Leonardo used to paint rich beautiful people although sometimes drew poor people from the back streets of Milan. They were very ugly and Leonardo exaggerated some parts of their faces and they made people laugh so Leonardo can be considered one of the first cartoonists of the world too.

Other than being an artist, he was interested in many other things. He was a scientist. One of his greatest dreams was to fly so he observed and studied the movements of birds and insects to develop the first flying machine in history. He made wings out of wood, cloth and feathers that eventually one of his students put on. He tried to fly jumping off a hill near Florence. Luckily he only broke some of his bones.

Leonardo was centuries ahead of his time and five hundred years ago he designed the first precursors of the tank and the car. He also designed bridges, canals, houses, musical instruments and many more things.

He studied the human body. He drew and described the bones and the muscles and his discoveries were really useful to understand human anatomy. Still today, his studies are impressive. This helped him to make his paintings more realistic.

Leonardo had many talents and he also was in good shape. He liked riding horses and did it well. He was a good musician too.

He never got married but he adopted one child, Salaino. He wasn't a good boy, he used to steal money from Leonardo and lie to him, but Leonardo was kind to him. Thanks to his kindness Salaino became honest and eventually was a good artist too.

1. Fill in the blanks with information from the text:

- a. Leonardo da Vinci was born in a small town called _____ in Italy in _____.
- b. He painted _____, known as the Mona Lisa.
- c. Millions of people come every year to see the _____ and her enigmatic smile.
- d. Leonardo used to paint _____ people although sometimes drew _____ from the back streets of Milan.
- e. One of his greatest dreams was to _____.
- f. He studied the human _____.
- g. He never _____ but he adopted one child.

2. True or False

- a. Leonardo was born in Vinci in 1455.
- b. He is one of the most famous people of all time.
- c. The Mona Lisa is in the National Gallery in London.
- d. Leonardo lived in Milan.
- e. He wasn't interested in many things.
- f. He made wings out of cardboard.
- g. Leonardo was centuries ahead of his time.
- h. He drew and described the bones and the muscles.
- i. He used to ride horses.
- j. He got married once.

3. Questions.

- a. Leonardo was a great artist, but what other disciplines did he develop?
- b. Where is the Mona Lisa?
- c. Why can Leonardo be considered one of the first cartoonists in history?
- d. Why did he observe and study birds and insects?
- e. Who tried to fly using the wings Leonardo made?
- f. Did that person get injured?
- g. What modern vehicles did Leonardo design five centuries ago?
- h. In what ways did the study of the human body help him?
- i. What was the boy's name he adopted?