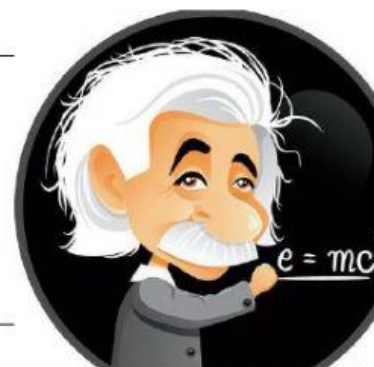


FAMOUS PEOPLE IN HISTORY

Albert found school difficult. While he was excellent at maths and physics, he couldn't pass many subjects such as French, chemistry and biology. One teacher told him that he "would not amount to anything."



Thomas Alva Edison invented the electric light bulb in 1879.



He was born in Ohio, America. He was the seventh child of Samuel and Nancy Edison.

As a child, he couldn't hear. He had hearing problems from the illness scarlet fever. His mother was a teacher, so he did not go to school but was taught at home.

Beethoven started playing the piano when he was very young. He could play perfectly well at the age of 8. When he was in his twenties, Beethoven began to lose his hearing.

He could no longer hear music, but he composed it. He could 'hear' the music he was writing in his head.



Mozart composed his first piece of music at age five; he had his first piece published when he was seven; and he wrote his first opera when he was twelve. By the time Wolfgang was 6, he could play the piano and the violin.

Read the texts and write TRUE or FALSE.

1. Einstein was very good at French.

2. Edison had seven siblings.

3. He had an illness when he was a child and he couldn't hear.

4. Beethoven couldn't play any musical instrument when he was a child.

5. He could compose when he was 20 but he couldn't hear the music.

6. Mozart wrote his first piece of music when he was 5.

7. He could play two musical instruments.

Now. Go back to the texts and complete these two sentences.

• Beethoven play the piano perfectly well when he was 8.

• Beethoven lost his hearing and he hear the music he composed.



When do you use **COULD** and **COULDN'T**?

We use **COULD** to describe the ability to do something in the past. **Could** is the past of **CAN**. The negative form is **COULDN'T**.

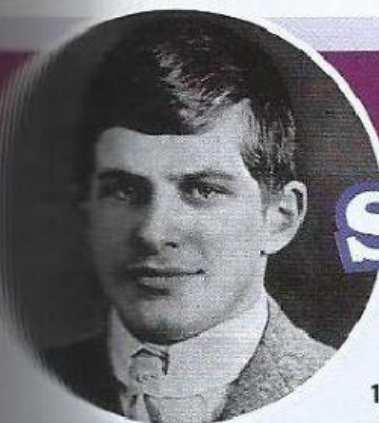
For example:

I could read when I was 4.

I couldn't ride a bike when I was 3.

"Could you swim when you were 6?" "Yes, I could." / "No, I couldn't."

Complete the text with affirmative and negative forms of **can** and **could**.



William Sidis Supergenius

Most people can't read until they're six and they ¹ usually speak one, two or maybe three languages as children. William Sidis was born in 1898, and when he was eighteen months old, he ² read. Before he was eight he wrote four books and ³ speak eight languages. William was a genius with a very high IQ, but in the end he lived a lonely life. He went to university at eleven, but he ⁴ make friends and was very unhappy. William died in 1944. Prodigies ⁵ do special or amazing things, but they ⁶ always find a place in society. Life is sometimes difficult when you're different.