

Thomas Edison

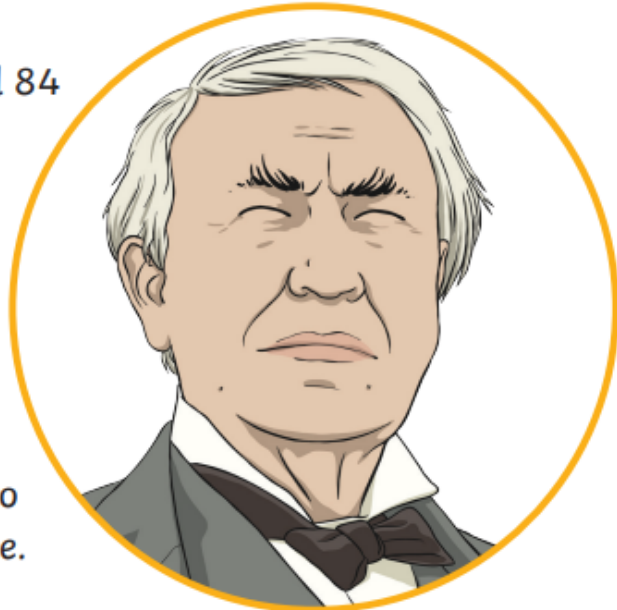
Born: 11th February, 1847

Died: 18th October, 1931 aged 84

Childhood

Thomas Edison was born in Ohio, America.

As a child 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.



Getting a Job

He got his first job by accident. He saved a 3 year-old boy from being hit by a train, and the boy's father was so grateful that he gave Thomas a job as a telegraph operator.

A telegraph operator: a person who operates a telephone switchboard.

At 19 years old, Thomas got a new job. He wanted to work at night so that he could carry on with his experiments. One night, he spilt sulphuric acid on the floor and it dripped through the wooden floor boards onto the desk of his boss below. Thomas Edison lost his job!

First Invention

Thomas Edison's first invention was in 1877 – the phonograph. This was a machine that could record and replay sound. The sound was played through a large horn.

Thomas Edison

An Amazing Man

Thomas Edison was a very careful worker. He thought hard about all the different things that could go wrong in a project and how to put things right. He managed to get very important people interested in his inventions and they gave money to help him, so that Thomas had the time to work on them properly.



The Electric Lightbulb

Thomas wanted to invent a light that did not need oils or gas to be lit. Edison created a lightbulb that would stay lit using electricity for $13 \frac{1}{2}$ hours!

His Legacy

Thomas Edison died in 1931; he was 84 years old. Almost everyone in the world has used at least one of his inventions: the electric lightbulb. We are still using them today, almost 100 years later!



Edison with his phonograph invention.

Thomas Edison Questions

Answer the following questions in as much detail as you can and using full sentences.

1. Why did Thomas Edison have hearing problems?

2. How did he get his first job as a telegraph operator?

3. How did his boss find out he was doing experiments while he was at work?

4. What was the name of the invention that could record sound?

Thomas Edison Questions

5. What did his electric lightbulb not need to work, that other previous lights did?

6. Name one quality in Thomas Edison's character that made him a great inventor.

7. How old was Thomas Edison when he died?

8. Why should we be grateful to Thomas Edison?
