

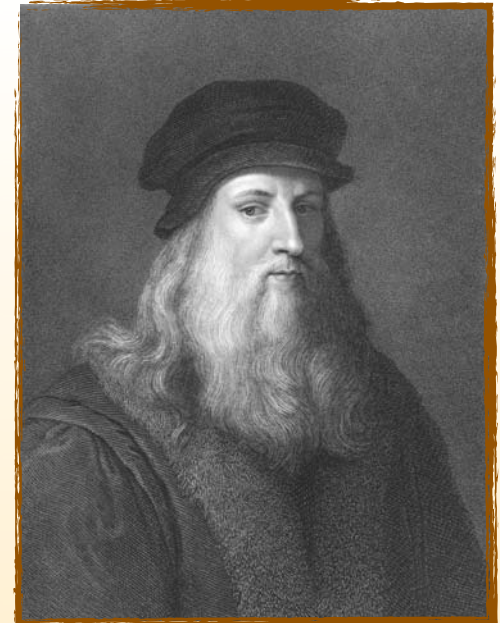
Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo da Vinci was born in the village of Vinci (in Italy) on 15th April 1452.



Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo's father was a lawyer, but little is known about his mother. She may have been a servant.



Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo spent the first year of his life with his mother. He then went to live with his father's parents.



Leonardo da Vinci

Most children in Italy did not go to school when Leonardo was a child. However, he was taught reading, writing, maths and music by his family.



Leonardo da Vinci

He lived during the Renaissance period. During this time, artists wanted to show the world as it really was, instead of making up features and clothing.



Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo and his father moved to Florence in the 1460s and he was trained by a successful artist called Andrea del Verrocchio.



Leonardo da Vinci

During his training, Leonardo helped Verrocchio with his paintings. In 1473, he completed his first painting on his own. It is called The Annunciation.



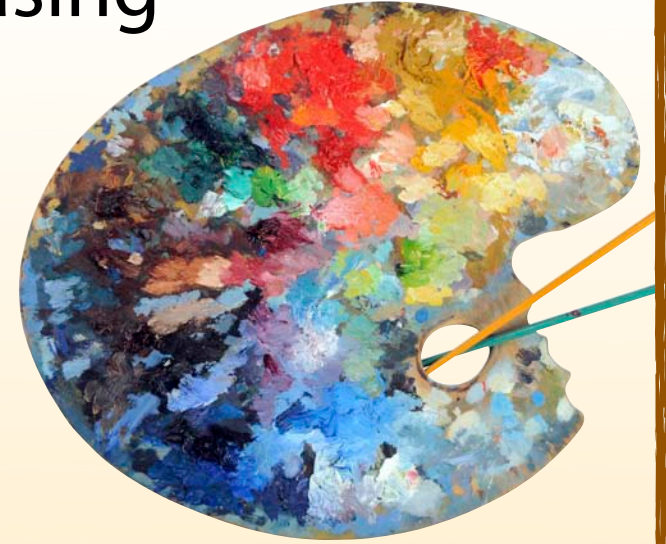
Leonardo da Vinci

In 1478, Leonardo was asked to paint an altarpiece showing the birth of Jesus. He was paid in advance for it, but he never finished the painting. He often left his work unfinished.



Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo first learned to paint using a style called tempera (which used pigments, water and egg yolk). He had to paint fast because the paint dried quickly.



Leonardo da Vinci

He then used oil painting, a new style of painting which came from the Netherlands. He preferred this because it allowed him to work at his own pace.



Leonardo da Vinci

In the 1480s, Leonardo began using notebooks to write and sketch his ideas. Throughout his life, he may have written 20,000 pages but only about 7,000 of them survive today.



Leonardo da Vinci

In his notebooks, he used 'mirror writing', writing from right to left. This was easier for him (because he was left-handed) and it also made it harder for others to read his private notes.



Leonardo da Vinci

He was fascinated by water and he sketched drops of water, waves and inventions connected with water.



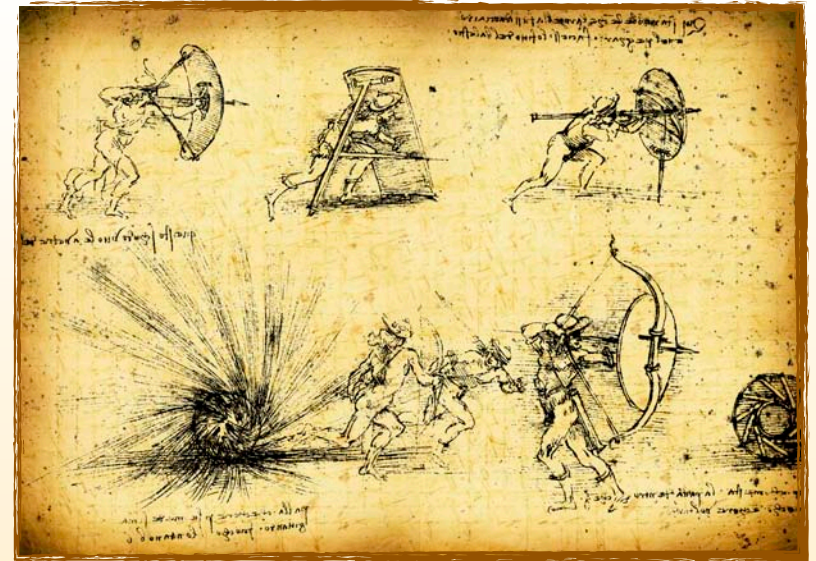
Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo was also interested in flight and he hoped to design a device that could fly. He cut open the wings of dead birds to learn about their bones and muscles.



Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo also sketched designs for bridges, tunnels, shields, catapults, guns and other weapons in his notebooks.



Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo spent about four years painting the Mona Lisa. However, he never considered it finished and he continued to work on it for the rest of his life.



Leonardo da Vinci

One of Leonardo's most famous paintings is the Last Supper. It took two to three years to complete but it has been restored many times because the paint wore away.



Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo loved animals and he was a vegetarian.



Leonardo da Vinci

He invented the parachute in 1485. His design was first tested in 2000 and it worked perfectly!



Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo dissected the bodies of more than 30 men and women to learn about the different parts of the human body and how they worked.



Leonardo da Vinci

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