

My Drift

Title: Men Who Changed the World

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Contrary to what I told our kids when I went on TDY trips to various countries, I didn't really save or change the world. Well, maybe a little bit! In this article, I will list several important and influential men who did change the world. I think my family and most of my friends will agree that the person who changed the world the most was Jesus Christ. Right?

Most people will not agree with my list, but I don't care – you can make your own list. I was thinking about this interesting subject the other night while sitting outside with my dog Apache. I come up with a short list but after researching it on the Internet, my list changed a lot and got much longer. These powerful men had a major influence on the world, not necessarily in a good way. I'm including men from the following categories: (Click on the category you want to look at)

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Spiritual Leaders



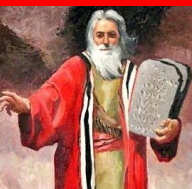
Jesus Christ (0 AD – 32 AD) taught a gospel of love and forgiveness. His philosophy and spirit inspired the creation of the Christian religion. Most Christians believe him to be the incarnation of God the Son and the awaited Messiah (Christ) prophesied in the Old Testament.



Muhammad (570 – 632 AD) was the founder of Islam. According to Islamic doctrine, he was a prophet and God's messenger, sent to present and confirm the teachings preached previously by Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and other prophets. The revelations he shared became the foundation of the Qur'an and the Muslim religion.



Moses Parts the Red Sea



Moses (1391 – 1271 BC) was a Hebrew prophet, teacher, and leader who, in the 13th century BC delivered his people from Egyptian slavery. In the Covenant ceremony at Mt. Sinai, where the Ten Commandments were promulgated, he founded the religious community known as Israel.



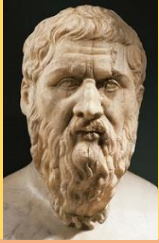
Buddha (560 – 460 BC) - Siddhartha Gautama, who would become known as Buddha ("enlightened one"). He was born in Nepal and achieved enlightenment through meditation and his doctrines became the foundation for Buddhism. He is believed to have lived and taught mostly in the eastern part of ancient India.



St Paul (5 BC – 64 AD) was an apostle (though not one of the Twelve Apostles) who taught the gospel of the Christ to the first century world. He is generally considered one of the most important figures of the Apostolic Age and in the mid-30s to the mid-50s AD he founded several churches in Asia Minor and Europe.

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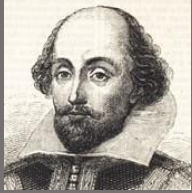
Philosophers/Writers



Plato (424 – 348 BC) was a philosopher in Classical Greece and the founder of the Academy in Athens, the first institution of higher learning in the Western world. He is widely considered the most pivotal figure in the development of philosophy, especially the Western tradition.



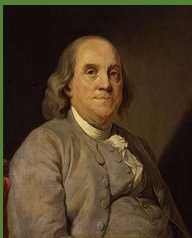
Socrates (469 – 399 BC) was a classical Greek philosopher credited as one of the founders of Western philosophy, and as being the first moral philosopher, of the Western ethical tradition of thought.



William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616 AD) was an English playwright and poet, widely regarded as both the greatest writer in the English language, and the world's pre-eminent dramatist. He is often called England's national poet, and the "Bard of Avon".



Confucius (551 - 479 BC) was a Chinese teacher, editor, politician, and philosopher of the Spring and Autumn period of Chinese history. The philosophy of Confucius, also known as Confucianism, emphasized personal and governmental morality, correctness of social relationships, justice and sincerity.



Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) was an inventor, scientist, printer, politician, and diplomat. He helped to draft the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. He negotiated the 1783 Treaty of Paris ending the Revolutionary War. His scientific pursuits included investigations into electricity and mapmaking. A writer known for his wit and wisdom, Franklin published Poor Richard's Almanack. Franklin invented bifocal glasses.



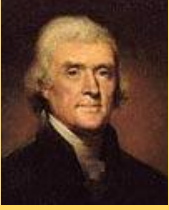
Karl Marx (1818 – 1883) was a German Marxist philosopher. Author of Das Kapital and The Communist Manifesto which promoted the idea of a Communist Revolution.



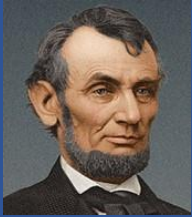
William Penn (1644 – 1718) wrote the Pennsylvania Frame of Government (1682), including democratic principles and the principle of religious tolerance.

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Political Leaders



Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) was the founding father and author of The Declaration of Independence (1776). “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal”. He was also the third President of the United States.



Abraham Lincoln (1809 – 1865) was an American statesman and lawyer who served as the 16th President of the United States from 1861 until his assassination in 1865. Lincoln led the United States through the American Civil War—its bloodiest war and perhaps its greatest moral, constitutional, and political crisis. In doing so, he preserved the Union, abolished slavery, strengthened the federal government, and modernized the economy.



John F. Kennedy (1917 – 1963) was elected in 1960 as the 35th president of the US, 43-year-old John F. Kennedy became the youngest man and the first Roman Catholic to hold that office. He was born into one of America’s wealthiest families and parlayed an elite education and a reputation as a military hero into a successful run for Congress in 1946 and for the Senate in 1952. As president, Kennedy confronted mounting Cold War tensions in Cuba and Vietnam.



Ronald Reagan (1911 – 2004) was a politician and actor who served as the 40th President from 1981 to 1989. Prior to the presidency, he was a Hollywood actor before serving as the 33rd Governor of California from 1967 to 1975. Reagan sought to roll back the frontiers of the state and pursued an aggressive anti-Communist foreign policy.



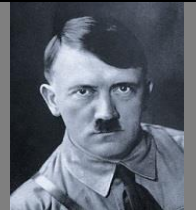
Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882 – 1945) was the 32nd President of the U.S. from 1933 until his death in 1945. FDR won a record four presidential elections. Roosevelt directed the federal government during most of the Great Depression, implementing his New Deal domestic agenda in response to the worst economic crisis in U.S. history. His third and fourth terms were dominated by World War II.



Winston Churchill (1874 – 1965) was Prime Minister 1940-1945, successfully leading Great Britain against Nazi Germany during World War II.



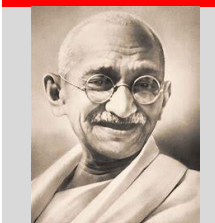
Martin Luther King (1929–1968) was a non-violent civil rights leader. Inspired American civil rights movement to achieve greater equality for black people.



Adolf Hitler (1889 – 1945) was the leader of the Nazi Party of Germany from 1933 to 1945 and Führer ("Leader") of Nazi Germany from 1934 to 1945. As dictator, Hitler initiated World War II in Europe with the invasion of Poland in September 1939 and was person responsible for the Holocaust.



Mao Zedong (1893 – 1976) is commonly known as Chairman Mao. He was a Chinese communist revolutionary who became the founding father of the People's Republic of China, which he ruled as the Chairman of the Communist Party of China from its establishment in 1949 until his death in 1976. His theories, military strategies, and political policies are collectively known as Maoism.



Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1889 – 1948) was an Indian activist who was the leader of the Indian independence movement against British rule. Employing nonviolent civil disobedience, Gandhi led India to independence and inspired movements for civil rights and freedom across the world.

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Military Leaders



George Washington (1732–1799) known as the "Father of His Country," was an American soldier and statesman who served from 1789 to 1797 as the first President of the United States. He led America to independence from Great Britain and was the Commander of American forces during the War of Independence.



Dwight Eisenhower (1890 – 1969) was a five-star general in the US Army and served as Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces in Europe. He was responsible for planning and supervising the invasion of North Africa in Operation Torch in 1942–43 and the successful invasion of France and Germany in 1944–45 from the Western Front. He later served as the 34th President of the United States from 1953 to 1961.



Napoleon Bonaparte (1769 – 1821) was a French military leader who conquered much of Europe in the early 19th century. Napoleon rapidly rose through the ranks of the military during the French Revolution (1789-1799). After seizing political power in France in a 1799, he crowned himself emperor. As a skilled military strategist, Napoleon successfully waged war against various European nations and expanded his empire. However, Napoleon suffered a crushing defeat at the Battle of Waterloo.



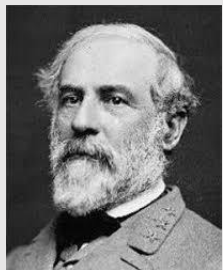
Alexander the Great (356 – 323 BC) was the king of the ancient Greek kingdom of Macedon. He was born in Pella, Greece and succeeded his father Philip II to the throne at the age of twenty. He spent most of his ruling years on an unprecedented military campaign through Asia and northeast Africa, and he created one of the largest empires of the ancient world by the age of thirty, stretching from Greece to northwestern India. He was undefeated in battle and is widely considered one of history's most successful military commanders.



Constantine the Great (273 – 337 AD) was the first Roman Emperor to convert to Christianity. He was a great military commander winning major victories over the Franks and Alamanni in 306-308, and later against the Visigoths in 332 and the Sarmatians in 334. In 312, the forces of Maxentius met Constantine's forces on the river Tiber. Constantine's army was outnumbered 2:1. But, legends state that in the night he had a significant dream, where he had a vision of Jesus and was told to use the Christian cross. Constantine made his soldiers go into battle with the Christian cross and he made a promise that if successful in battle, he would adopt Christianity.



Attila the Hun (406–453 AD) was King of the Huns, a nomadic central Asian tribe that settled near the Danube. Attila rose to be a powerful king claiming sovereignty over all the tribes between the Baltic Sea and the Danube. His army was formidable and created an empire stretching from the Rhine to China. Attila and his army were given the nickname the 'Scourge of God' for their reputation for creating a trail of devastation wherever they went.



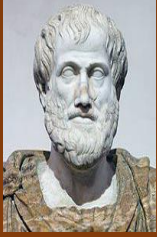
Robert Edward Lee (1807 –1870) was best known as a commander of the Confederate States Army. He commanded the Army of Northern Virginia in the American Civil War from 1862 until his surrender in 1865. A son of Revolutionary War officer Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee III, Lee was a top graduate of the United States Military Academy and an exceptional officer and military engineer in the US Army for 32 years. During this time, he served throughout the US, distinguished himself during the Mexican–American War, and served as Superintendent of the US Military Academy.



Sitting Bull (1831 – 1890) was a Hunkpapa Lakota leader who led his people during years of resistance to US government policies. He was killed by Indian agency police on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation during an attempt to arrest him, at a time when authorities feared that he would join the Ghost Dance movement. The confederated Lakota tribes along with the Northern Cheyenne defeated the 7th Cavalry under Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer on June 25, 1876, annihilating Custer's battalion and seeming to bear out Sitting Bull's prophetic vision. Sitting Bull's leadership inspired his people to this major victory.

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Scientists



Aristotle (384 – 322 BC) was a Greek scientist who made investigations and discoveries in the natural sciences including botany, zoology, physics, astronomy, chemistry, meteorology, and geometry.



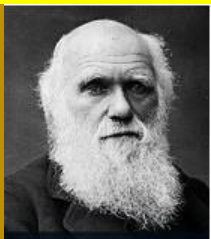
Galileo (1564 – 1642) was an Italian astronomer, mathematician, physicist, and philosopher who made pioneering observations of nature with long-lasting implications for the study of physics. He also constructed a telescope and supported the Copernican theory, which supports a sun-centered solar system. Galileo was accused twice of heresy by the Catholic church for his beliefs.



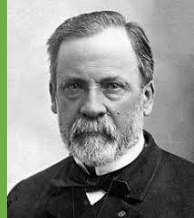
Sir Isaac Newton (1642–1727) was a physicist, mathematician, alchemist, and philosopher. Newton discovered laws of gravity and motion.



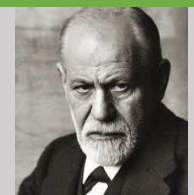
Michael Faraday (1791 – 1867) was a British scientist who contributed to the study of electromagnetism and electrochemistry. His main discoveries include the principles underlying electromagnetic induction, diamagnetism, and electrolysis. These led to the development of electricity.



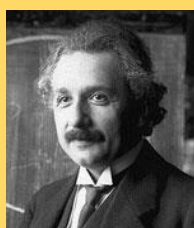
Charles Darwin (1809 – 1882) was an English naturalist and geologist who was best known for his contributions to the science of evolution. He taught that all species of life have descended over time from common ancestors and introduced his scientific theory that evolution resulted from a process that he called natural selection.



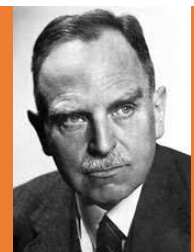
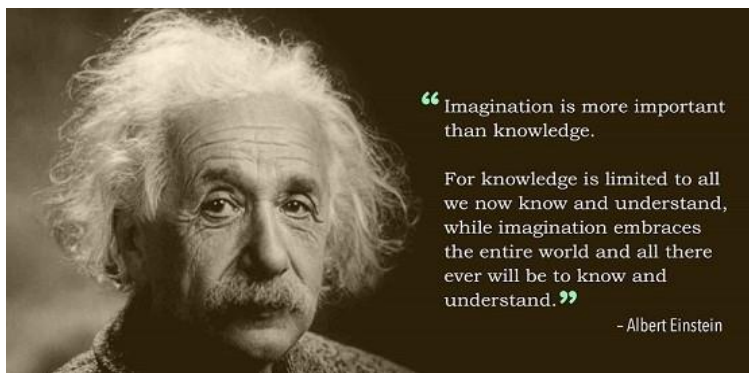
Louis Pasteur (1822 – 1895) was a French biologist, microbiologist, and chemist renowned for his discoveries of the principles of vaccination, microbial fermentation, and pasteurization. His work contributed substantially towards developing cures for rabies, anthrax, and other infectious diseases.



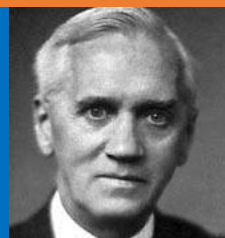
Sigmund Freud (1885 – 1939) was an Austrian physician and the leading figure in the new science of psychoanalysis. Freud made an extensive study of dreams and the subconscious.



Albert Einstein (1879 – 1955) was a German-born theoretical physicist who developed the theory of relativity, one of the two pillars of modern physics (alongside quantum mechanics). His work is also known for its influence on the philosophy of science. He is best known for his mass–energy equivalence formula $E = mc^2$, which has been dubbed "the world's most famous equation".



Otto Hahn (1879-1968) was a German Chemist, who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1944 – for his work in discovering Nuclear Fission. He was a distinguished Chemist who worked in the pioneering fields of radio chemistry. After the Second World War, he was a campaigner against the use of nuclear weapons and became an influential scientific figure in West Germany.

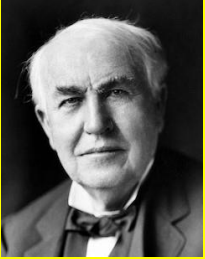


Alexander Fleming (1881-1955) was a Scottish biologist who discovered penicillin. Shared Nobel Prize in 1945 with Howard Florey and Ernst Boris Chain, who helped produce penicillin on a large scale.

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Inventors

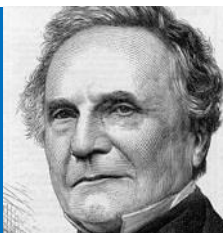
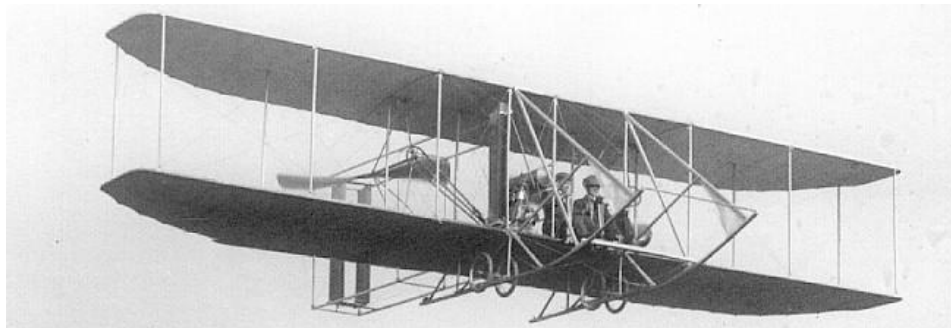
NOTE: In October 2014, I wrote a 4-part article titled “Inventions that Changed the World.” If you are interested in this kind of stuff, you can find this article on my website – bigdrifter.com



Thomas Edison (1847–1931) filed over 1000 patents. He developed and innovated a wide range of products from the electric light bulb to the phonograph and motion picture camera.



The Wright brothers, Orville (1871 – 1948) and Wilbur (1867 – 1912), were two American aviators, engineers, inventors, and aviation pioneers who are generally credited with inventing, building, and flying the world's first successful airplane. In 1903 the Wright brothers achieved the first powered, sustained, and controlled airplane flight.



Charles Babbage (1791 – 1871) was an English mathematician, philosopher, inventor, and mechanical engineer. Babbage originated the concept of a digital programmable computer. Babbage is considered the ‘father of computers’ for his pioneering work.





Alexander Graham Bell (1847 –1922) was a Scottish-born scientist, inventor, engineer, and innovator who is credited with inventing and patenting the first practical telephone.



Eli Whitney (1765 –1825) was an American inventor best known for inventing the cotton gin. This was one of the key inventions of the Industrial Revolution and shaped the economy of the American South.



Samuel Morse (1791 – 1872) was an American artist and inventor best remembered for his invention of the single-wire telegraph system and the co-inventor of Morse code.



Cai Lun (50–121 CE) was the Chinese inventor of paper and the paper-making process. His invention included the use of raw materials such as bark, hemp, silk and fishing net. The sheets of fiber were suspended in water before removing for drying.



Rudolf Diesel (1858–1913) is the German inventor of the Diesel engine. Diesel sought to build an engine which had much greater efficiency. This led him to develop a diesel-powered combustion engine.



Sir Timothy John Berners-Lee (1955 -) is an English engineer and computer scientist, best known as the inventor of the World Wide Web. He is currently a professor of Computer Science at the University of Oxford and at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). He implemented the first successful communication between a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) client and server via the internet in mid-November 1989.

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Explorers



Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) is famous for the discovery and colonization of the Americas. Although Italian by birth, maritime explorer Christopher Columbus sailed across the Atlantic Ocean and discovered the Americas under the Spanish emperor's name. During his first voyage, he led three Spanish galleons, the Niña, Pinta, and the Santa Maria. All in all, between 1492 and 1503, completed four voyages across the Atlantic Ocean. Those voyages, and his efforts to establish settlements initiated the permanent European colonization of the New World.



Neil Armstrong (1930-2012) was the first person to walk on the moon in 1969. The whole world heard these words, "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind." Before becoming an astronaut with NASA, he was a Naval Aviator, officer in the US Navy, and a test pilot.



Marco Polo (1254-1324) was an Italian merchant, explorer, and writer, born in the Republic of Venice. His travels are recorded in the book known as "The Travels of Marco Polo" that described to Europeans the wealth and great size of China, its capital Peking, and other Asian cities and countries.



Ferdinand Magellan (1480 - 1521) was the first sailor to circumnavigate the seas from the Atlantic Ocean and cross the Pacific Ocean. He discovered the Philippines where he was killed in what is known as the Battle of Mactan. His name has been associated to not just things explored during his voyages, but to the stars and galaxies above us as well.



The **Lewis and Clark** Expedition from May 1804 to September 1806 was the first American expedition to cross the western portion of the United States. It began near St. Louis, made its way westward, and passed through the Continental Divide of the Americas to reach the Pacific coast. The Corps of Discovery was a selected group of US Army volunteers under the command of Captain Meriwether Lewis and his close friend Second Lieutenant William Clark.



Captain James Cook (1728 – 1779) was a British explorer, navigator, cartographer, and captain in the Royal Navy. Cook made detailed maps of Newfoundland prior to making three voyages to the Pacific Ocean, during which he achieved the first recorded European contact with the eastern coastline of Australia and the Hawaiian Islands, and the first recorded circumnavigation of New Zealand. Cook was attacked and killed in 1779 during his third exploratory voyage in the Pacific while attempting to kidnap Kalani'ōpu'u, a Hawaiian chief, in order to reclaim a cutter stolen from one of his ships.



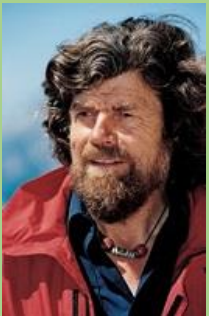
Jacques-Yves Cousteau (1910 – 1997) was a French naval officer, explorer, conservationist, filmmaker, innovator, scientist, photographer, author and researcher who studied the sea and all forms of life in water. He co-developed the Aqua-lung and pioneered marine conservation.



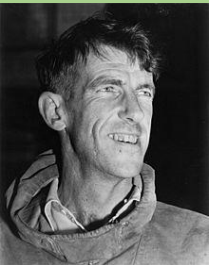
Sir Francis Drake (1540 – 1596) was an English sea captain, slave trader, naval officer and explorer. Drake carried out the second circumnavigation of the world in a single expedition, from 1577 to 1580. With his incursion into the Pacific Ocean, he claimed what is now California for the English and inaugurated an era of conflict with the Spanish on the western coast of the Americas.



Yuri Alekseyevich Gagarin (1934 – 1968) was a Soviet pilot and cosmonaut. He was the first human to journey into outer space when his Vostok spacecraft completed an orbit of the Earth on 12 April 1961.



Reinhold Messner (1944 -) is an Italian mountaineer, adventurer, explorer, and author. He made the first solo ascent of Mount Everest, the first ascent of Everest without supplemental oxygen, along with Peter Habeler, and was the first climber to ascend all fourteen peaks over 8,000 meters (26,000 ft) above sea level. He was also the first person to cross Antarctica and Greenland with neither snowmobiles nor dog sleds. Furthermore, he crossed the Gobi Desert alone.



Sir Edmund Hillary (1919 – 2008) was a New Zealand mountaineer, explorer, and philanthropist. On 29 May 1953, Hillary and Nepalese Sherpa mountaineer Tenzing Norgay became the first climbers confirmed to have reached the summit of Mount Everest. They were part of the ninth British expedition to Everest, led by John Hunt.



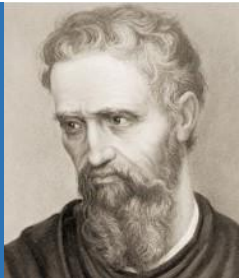
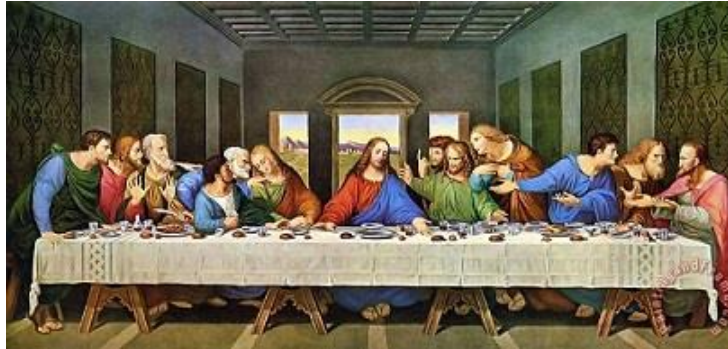
With every continent of the earth fully mapped, explorers of the 20th century set their sights on only two remaining unmapped parts of the world - North and South Pole. Several dozen expeditions went into harsh Pole environments in search for glory and scientific discovery. Most failed and many died. Finally, Norwegian Roald Amundsen (1872 – 1928) was first to reach the South Pole on December 14, 1911 and American Robert Peary was first to reach the North Pole April 6, 1909.

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Artists and Painters



Leonardo Da Vinci (1452 – 1519) was an Italian Renaissance painter, scientist, inventor, and polymath. Da Vinci is one of most famous painters for his iconic Mona Lisa and Last Supper.



Michelangelo (1475 – 1564) was an renaissance sculptor, painter and architect. Famous works include the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and the statue of David.



Rembrandt (1606 – 1669) was a Dutch draughtsman, painter, and printmaker. An innovative and prolific master in three media, he is generally considered one of the greatest visual artists in the history of art and the most important in Dutch art history. He is admired for his vivid realism and empathy with the human condition.

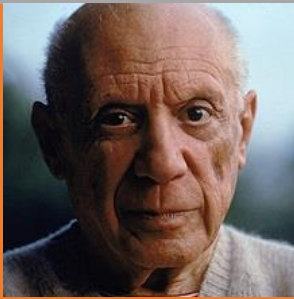


Claude Monet (1840 – 1926) French impressionist painter. Monet's painting – Impression, Soleil Levant (Impression, Sunrise), led to the title of the Impressionist Movement.





Vincent Van Gogh (1853 – 1890) was a Dutch Impressionist painter who is among the most famous and influential figures in the history of Western art. In just over a decade he created about 2,100 artworks, including around 860 oil paintings, most of them in the last two years of his life. They include landscapes, still life, portraits and self-portraits, and are characterized by bold colors and dramatic, impulsive and expressive brushwork that contributed to the foundations of modern art. His suicide at 37 followed years of mental illness and poverty.



Pablo Picasso (1881 – 1973) was a Spanish painter, sculptor, printmaker, ceramicist, stage designer, poet and playwright who spent most of his adult life in France. Regarded as one of the most influential artists of the 20th century, he is known for co-founding the Cubist movement, the invention of constructed sculpture, the co-invention of collage, and for the wide variety of styles that he helped develop and explore.



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Musicians and Composers



Bach (1685 – 1750) was a German composer of the Baroque period. One of the most prolific composers of all time. Bach composed sacred and classical masterpieces.



Mozart (1756 – 1791) was a Austrian classical composer. Mozart's repertoire varied from light waltzes and dances to the spiritual elevating choral music of Missa Brevis and Mass in C minor.



Beethoven (1770 – 1827) was a German composer and pianist of the classical and romantic period. A prodigious genius, Beethoven's compositions had a lasting influence on western classical music.



Elvis Presley (1935 – 1977) was an American singer and actor. Regarded as one of the most significant cultural icons of the 20th century, he is often referred to as the "King of Rock and Roll" or simply "the King".

The Beatles



The Beatles in 1964. Clockwise from top left: John Lennon, Paul McCartney, Ringo Starr, and George Harrison



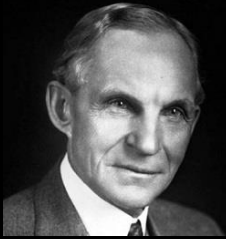
The Beatles were an English rock band formed in Liverpool in 1960. They became widely regarded as the most influential music band in history.



Michael Jackson (1958 – 2009) was an American singer, songwriter, and dancer. Dubbed the "King of Pop", he was one of the most popular entertainers in the world and was a global figure in popular culture for over four decades.

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Business Leaders



Henry Ford (1863 – 1947) pioneer of the Model T launched more than just engines, but, through his Model T assembly line, a more efficient means of working. This approach to production lowered the cost of materials and the final product, which changed American vehicle accessibility and the world around him.



Bill Gates (1955) is an American business magnate, investor, author, philanthropist, humanitarian, and the principal founder of Microsoft Corporation. During his career at Microsoft, Gates held the positions of CEO and chief software architect. In 1975, Gates and Paul Allen launched Microsoft, which became the world's largest PC software company.



Steve Jobs (1955 – 2011) was an American business magnate. He was the CEO and a co-founder of Apple Inc. Jobs is widely recognized as a pioneer of the microcomputer revolution of the 1970s and 1980s, along with Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak. He didn't necessarily invent the wheel, but he sure did reinvent it—the computer, that is—to become more accessible and exciting to the entire world.

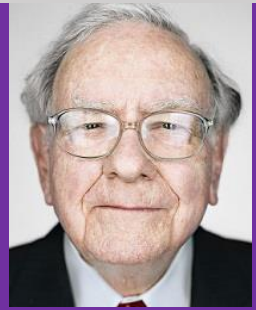


Mark Zuckerberg (1984) is an American technology entrepreneur best known for co-founding and leading Facebook as its chairman and chief executive officer. Zuckerberg attended Harvard University, where he launched Facebook from his dormitory room on February 4, 2004, with college roommates Eduardo Saverin, Andrew McCollum, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes. Zuckerberg took the company public in May 2012 with majority shares. His net worth is estimated to be US\$66.4 billion as of April 19, 2018.

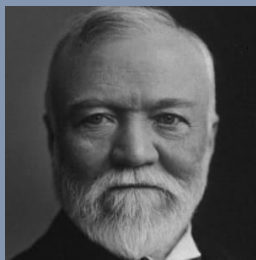




John D. Rockefeller (1839 – 1937) was an American oil industry business magnate, industrialist, and philanthropist. He is widely considered the wealthiest American of all time and the richest person in modern history. Standard Oil also managed to shape America's laws and public attitudes towards monopolies.



Warren Buffett (1930) is one of the most successful investors in the world. Some people have referred to him as the “Wizard of Omaha” and he is consistently named as one of the wealthiest people in the world. He has also pledged to give away nearly 99% of his accumulated wealth after his death.



Andrew Carnegie (1835 – 1919) was a Scottish-American industrialist, business magnate, and philanthropist. Carnegie led the expansion of the American steel industry in the late 19th century and is often identified as one of the richest people in the world. He gave away about \$350 million to charities.



Walter Disney (1901 – 1966) was an animator, voice actor and film producer. A pioneer of the animation industry and he introduced several developments in the production of cartoons. He created the internationally-beloved brand that has captured millions of hearts worldwide. His storytelling served not only to entertain, but to also develop trust in his brand.

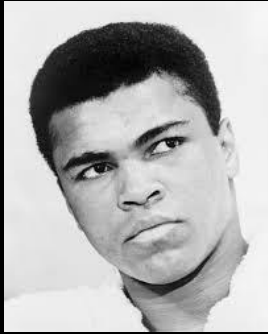


Sakichi Toyoda (豊田 佐吉 1867 - 1930) was a Japanese inventor and industrialist. He was born in Kosai, Shizuoka. The son of a farmer and sought-after carpenter, he started the Toyoda family companies. His son, Kiichiro Toyoda, would later establish the world's largest automaker, Toyota.



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Sports Stars



Muhammad Ali (born Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr. 1942 – 2016) was a professional boxer, activist, and philanthropist. He is widely regarded as one of the most significant and celebrated sports figures of the 20th century. From early in his career, Ali was known as an inspiring, controversial, and polarizing figure both inside and outside the ring. In 1966, two years after winning the heavyweight title, Ali further antagonized the white establishment by refusing to be drafted into the U.S. military, citing his religious beliefs and opposition to American involvement in the Vietnam War.

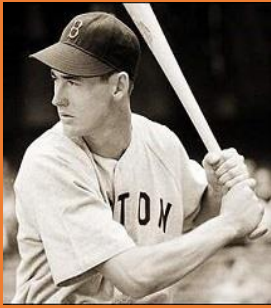


James "Jesse" Owens (1913 – 1980) was an American track and field athlete and four-time Olympic gold medalist in the 1936 Games. Owens specialized in the sprints and the long jump and was recognized in his lifetime as "perhaps the greatest and most famous athlete in track and field history". His achievement of setting three world records and tying another in less than an hour at the 1935 Big Ten track meet in Ann Arbor, Michigan, has been called "the greatest 45 minutes ever in sport" and has never been equaled. At the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin, Germany, Owens achieved international fame by winning four gold medals: 100 meters, 200 meters, long jump, and 4 × 100 meters relay. He was the most successful athlete at the Games and, as a black man, was credited with single-handedly crushing Hitler's myth of Aryan supremacy, although he wasn't invited to the White House to shake hands with the President, either.

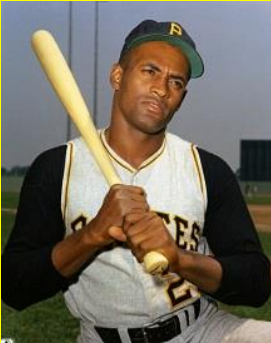


Jackie Robinson (1919 – 1972) was the first African American to play in Major League Baseball (MLB). Robinson broke the baseball color line when the Brooklyn Dodgers started him at first base on April 15, 1947. This ended racial segregation in professional baseball that had relegated black players to the Negro leagues since the 1880s. Robinson had an exceptional 10-year MLB career. He was the Rookie of the Year in 1947, an All-Star for six consecutive seasons from 1949 - 1954 and won the National League Most Valuable Player Award in 1949. Robinson played in six World Series and contributed to the Dodger's 1955 World Series championship. Robinson was inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1962.





Ted Williams (1918 – 2002) is considered by many to be the greatest hitter that ever lived. Thankfully, Williams is just as well known for his military career as he is for his days as a star left fielder for the Boston Red Sox. The Splendid Splinter served as a flight instructor in WWII and a combat pilot in Korea, totaling five years of active military service. Those years came right in the middle of what would have been Williams' prime baseball years. In both tours of duty, Williams was offered the chance to just play baseball for the Navy and Marines. He chose to fight instead.



Roberto Clemente (1934 – 1972) was a Puerto Rican baseball right fielder who played 18 seasons in Major League Baseball for the Pittsburgh Pirates. He was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1973. Clemente used to spend his off seasons doing charity work for his native Puerto Rico, but it was a charitable visit to Nicaragua that ultimately claimed his life. He was on a relief flight to Managua that was dangerously overloaded, and the plane crashed off the coast of Puerto Rico. He was 38 years old.



Pat Tillman (1976 – 2004) cut his football career short so he could enlist in the U.S. Army and fight in the War on Terror. Tillman was a star safety for the Arizona Cardinals at the time of the September 11th attacks, and he turned down a contract offer of \$3.6 million so he and his brother Kevin, who was a pretty good pitcher in his own right, could enlist in the Army. Tillman was killed in action in 2004, which, after some controversy, was revealed to have been due to friendly fire. As far as sacrifice goes, no contemporary athlete is anywhere near Tillman's level.



Joe Louis (1914 – 1981) was the first Black athlete to receive crossover appeal in mainstream America, earning reverence from black and white people alike. His astounding wins as a heavyweight champion got him the name “The Brown Bomber,” a man who, no matter what a boxing match or life threw at him, always rebounded. He even famously overcame his only boxing defeat with German fighter Max Schmeling in a much-publicized 1938 rematch. To many Americans, this rematch represented the United States overcoming Nazi Germany.

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