



Mary Anning

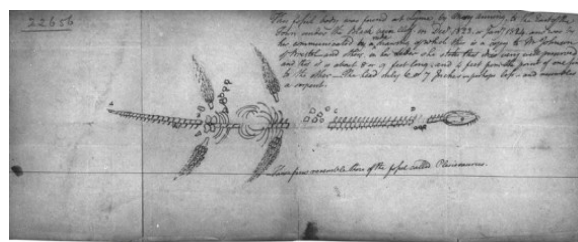
Mary Anning was born on 21st May 1799 in the seaside town of Lyme Regis in Dorset. Mary received little education but grew up to be a palaeontologist whose findings helped change the way scientists thought about the world.

Childhood:

Mary came from a poor family and was one of nine children. When Mary was young, her father would take the family for walks along the beach and cliffs at Lyme Regis. When Mary was 11 years old, her father died after falling from a cliff. As the family had very little money, Mary had to spend most days looking for shells to sell.

Findings:

During her childhood, Mary—curious and bright—taught herself to read and write. Most days, she went fossil hunting with her dog, Tray. In 1811, she and her brother found a 2m long skull sticking out of a cliff face. Mary used her hammer to chip away at the rock and uncovered a skeleton of what looked like a crocodile. However, she had found the first complete fossil Ichthyosaurus. She went on to find many more fossils.



Pen and ink sketch of a Plesiosaurus by Mary Anning, 1824

Fame:

During her life, Mary was supported by rich friends who sold her fossils on her behalf. The money earned enabled her to open a shop in Lyme Regis, selling shells, stones and fossils. Mary became famous and scientists wrote her letters and went to visit her. Her fossils had helped scientists understand how life began. Fossils had been found before Mary Anning discovered them, but no-one knew what they were.

Death and Legacy:

Mary died from breast cancer in 1847. Her discoveries were some of the most significant geological finds of all time. By the time of her death, geology was firmly established as its own scientific discipline.



Purpose: To give the reader information about someone else's life.

Key features

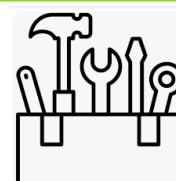


Structural:

- Introduction to summarise who the biography is about
- Key events of their life in order
- Paragraphs with subheadings
- Conclusion to explain how they died or to explain what they are doing now

Language:

- Past tense: Mary was born
- Third person: she went fossil hunting
- Proper nouns: Lyme Regis
- Adverbials of time: During her childhood; When Mary was young



Writer's toolbox

Adverbials of time:

As a child... During his education...
Shortly after this... Many years later...
At the age of... In later life...

Alan Peat:

Noun—adjective pair—sentence
Example: Mary—curious and bright—
taught herself to read.

Punctuation:

Remember to use capital letters and full stops accurately.
Try and use a comma following an adverbial of time

Vocabulary:

Education	Childhood
Legacy	Successful
Struggled	Adolescent

Recommended reads

