

4. A Truly Beautiful Mind

ALBERT Einstein was born on 14 March 1879 in the German city of Ulm, without any indication that he was destined for greatness. On the contrary, his mother thought Albert was a freak. To her, his head seemed much too large. (refer to the maps in the ppt for the location of places.)

2. At the age of two-and-a-half, Einstein still wasn't talking. When he finally did learn to speak, he uttered everything twice. Einstein did not know what to do with other children, and his playmates called him "Brother Boring." So the youngster played by himself much of the time, becoming a loner. He especially loved mechanical toys. Looking at his newborn sister, Maja, he is said to have said: "Fine, but where are her wheels?"

3. A headmaster once told his father that what Einstein chose as a profession wouldn't matter, because "he'll never make a success at anything." He said this in spite of Einstein doing well in physics and mathematics.

Einstein began learning to play the violin at the age of six, because his mother wanted him to; he later became a gifted amateur violinist, maintaining this skill throughout his life.

4. But Albert Einstein was not a bad pupil. He went to high school in Munich, where Einstein's family had moved when he was 15 years old, and scored good marks in almost every subject. Einstein hated the school's regimentation, and often clashed with his teachers. Perhaps, that was the reason the headmaster had developed a bitter attitude towards Einstein. At the age of 15, Einstein felt so stifled there that he left the school for good.

5. The previous year, Albert's parents had moved to Milan, and left their son with relatives. After prolonged discussion, Einstein got his wish to continue his education in German-speaking Switzerland, in a city which was more liberal than Munich.

6. Einstein was highly gifted in mathematics and interested in physics, and after finishing school, he decided to study at a university in Zurich. But science wasn't the only thing that appealed to the dashing young man with the walrus moustache.

freak: a word used disapprovingly to talk about a person who is unusual and doesn't behave, look or think like others)

Maja- pronounced Maya

amateur: doing something for personal enjoyment rather than as a profession)

regimentation: order or discipline taken to an extreme

stifled: unable to breathe; suffocated stifle (here suppressed, lacking freedom of expression)

liberal: willing to understand and respect others' opinions

Milan – a place in Italy,
Munich - myoonik

Zurich- zyoorik

walrus moustache- thick moustache

(contents: pages 46 & 47)