



WALT ELIAS DISNEY

5th December 1901 - 15th December 1966, Walt Disney was an extremely successful American entrepreneur, animator, voice actor and film producer. He co-founded the Walt Disney Company, which exists to this day, making, since it started, 58 feature films.

EARLY LIFE



Born to Elias and Flora Disney, Walt had three older brothers, Roy, who co-founded the Walt Disney Company, Raymond, Herbert and a younger sister named Ruth. At a young age, when he was asked to draw a neighbour's horse, he developed a passion for drawing. He also developed the skill to work with watercolours and crayons.

After moving to Kansas City, he started Benton Grammar School, at the same time as Ruth. At school, he met Walter Pfeiffer, a fellow student. Coming from a family of theatre fans, Walter introduced Walt into motion picture. Disney would do a paper round at 4:30 am with Roy, and another one after school. Due to this full schedule, he often fell asleep in class and didn't receive very high grades. However, he took a course on cartooning at Kansas City Art Institute.

THE INVENTION OF MICKEY MOUSE

Eventually, when he started animating, Disney created the character Oswald with Charels Mintz, who wanted to run it through Universal pictures. Disney hoped for a larger fee to produce 'Oswald the Lucky Rabbit' however, he found out that Mintz wanted a lower fee. Mintz also persuaded many of the artists to work for him. It was also discovered that universal owned Oswald, and Mintz threatened to produce Oswald on his own if Walt didn't accept the lower price. When Disney declined, he was left with only one member of staff (Iwerks).

Instead of Oswald, Disney and Iwerks created Mickey Mouse. Walt's preferred choice of name was Mortimer, however Iwerks proposed the name Mickey, thinking that Mortimer sounded too pompous. Until 1947, Walt was the voice of Mickey Mouse

FEATURE FILMS



There have been many Disney films created, often adapted from books like Mary Poppins by P. L. Travers, The Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling and Alice in Wonderland (originally called Alice's adventures in Wonderland) by Lewis Carrol. The first ever feature films by the Disney Company include: Snow White and the Seven Dwarves (1937), Pinocchio and Fantasia (both made in 1940) and Dumbo (1941)

WORLD WAR II

In WW2, the Walt Disney company formed the 'Walt Disney Training Films Unit' that created short instructional films including 'Aircraft Production Methods' among many others.

After the release of Bambi, Disney was in debt to the Bank of America (\$4 million) due to its underperformance. Even when added to the low earnings of Fantasia and Pinocchio and the money from the War Films this wasn't enough. Due to increasing competition from other studios, Disney filmed a series of real-life nature documentaries, from which they earned lots of money.



THEME PARKS



When Walt Disney decided to open a theme park, he envisioned a magical place where adults and children alike can interact with his characters and have fun. His vision was different to a stereotypical theme park as he wanted his theme park to be clean and hygienic and not to have the streets littered with rubbish, to be a place where people can experience the magic of Disney.

Around the world, there are a total of twelve Disney theme parks situated in: California, Florida, Paris, Tokyo, Shanghai, and Hong Kong. In these theme parks, there are sometimes separate parks within. For example, Florida has 4 different parks (Magic Kingdom, EPCOT, Hollywood Studios and Animal Kingdom). These theme parks include attractions, such as shows and rides, based on Disney films.

AWARDS

Among the many awards he has won, here is evidence of just how amazing Disney's films are:

- Out of his 59 nominations, he won 22 Oscars.
- He was presented 2 Golden Globe Special Achievement awards
- He received an Emmy award.
- Walt Disney also holds the record for the most Academy Awards (23)

FIND OUT MORE...

To find out more about the creation of the Disney theme parks, go to:

<http://www.plosin.com/beatbegins/projects/fischer.html>

For more information on Walt Disney go to: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walt_Disney

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. What was Walt Disney's first feature film?
2. How many Oscar **nominations** did he receive?
3. When was the film Pinocchio released?