

# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Stephen Hawking

### Who Was Stephen Hawking?

Stephen Hawking was an English scientist, teacher and author. He used a wheelchair to move around and a computer with a voice synthesiser to talk, after being diagnosed with a disease called ALS when he was at university. Stephen is best known for finding out a lot about the science of how the universe was made and predicting what might happen to it in the future.

### When Was Stephen Hawking Born?

Stephen was born on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1942 in Oxford, England. He was the eldest child of Frank Hawking and Isobel Walker. His parents loved learning and both went to the University of Oxford.

Stephen was born in the middle of the Second World War and London was a very dangerous place to be. Stephen's mother moved away from London to make sure that Stephen would be safe when he was born.



### What Was Stephen's Family Like?



Stephen had two sisters and one brother. People who knew Stephen's family thought that they were odd. They would each read a book while they ate meals and they didn't talk. They are said to have kept bees in their basement and made fireworks in their greenhouse!

### When Did Stephen Become Interested in Science?

Stephen became interested in science from an early age. He loved to lie on the grass in the garden and watch the stars with his mother. Stephen liked playing board games and making model planes and boats. Stephen also built a computer out of old clock and telephone parts when he was just 16 years old.

### What Did Stephen Discover about Space?

While at university, Stephen became very interested in black holes. At the time, people thought that black holes were places in space where gravity pulls so much that even light cannot get out. Yet Stephen noticed that one thing was able to get out of a black hole: radiation. Radiation is a wave of energy that can come out of or off something and Stephen found out that radiation can even come out of black holes.

What Stephen found out was so important that this type of radiation was named after him. It is called Hawking radiation. Stephen then used what he had learned to prove that the universe started with the Big Bang. Stephen's work and his great personality made millions of people become interested in science.

# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Questions

1. On which date was Stephen born? Tick **one**.

- ☐ 9<sup>th</sup> February 1924
- ☐ 8<sup>th</sup> December 1936
- ☐ 8<sup>th</sup> January 1942
- ☐ 7<sup>th</sup> March 1945

2. Which university did Stephen's parents go to? Tick **one**.

- ☐ University of London
- ☐ University of Oxford
- ☐ University of Science
- ☐ University of Hawking

3. What did Stephen build when he was 16 years old? Tick **one**.

- ☐ a telephone
- ☐ a clock
- ☐ a telescope
- ☐ a computer

4. Number the events below to show the order in which they appear in the text.

- ☐ Stephen became very interested in black holes.
- ☒ 1 Stephen was the eldest child of Frank Hawking and Isobel Walker.
- ☐ Stephen built a computer out of old clock and telephone parts.
- ☐ Stephen's mother moved away from London.
- ☐ People who knew Stephen's family thought that they were odd.

5. Give one reason why people thought that Stephen's family were odd.

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6. Find and copy the missing words:

Stephen's \_\_\_\_\_ and his great \_\_\_\_\_ made millions of people  
become interested in \_\_\_\_\_.

7. Sum up what Stephen discovered in 25 words or fewer.

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# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Shavuot

### What Is Shavuot?

Shavuot is a Jewish religious festival. Shavuot means 'weeks'.

It is a two-day festival, which takes place seven weeks after the spring festival of Passover.

### Facts about Shavuot

- Shavuot is a celebration of God giving the Jewish people the Torah on Mount Sinai more than 3,300 years ago.
- Moses was given instructions by God on Mount Sinai. These instructions are called Torah or 'law'.
- When Moses was given the Torah, it was seen as an important spiritual event for Jews.
- Jews believe that at that time, God promised his eternal love to the people and they gave their everlasting loyalty to God.



Mount Sinai

### Shavuot Rituals

- Prayers of thanks are said to God at Shavuot.
- Candles are lit.
- Jews spend the first night of Shavuot reading the Torah.
- Synagogues are decorated with flowers and plants to remember the flowers on Mount Sinai.
- The rules given to Moses, called the Ten Commandments, are read out in the synagogues.



### Did You Know...?

During Shavuot, dairy products, like milk, cheese, eggs and butter, are eaten to remind Jews of when God told Moses to lead the Jewish people from slavery.

# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Questions

1. If you celebrate Shavuot, which religion do you follow?

- ☐ Christianity
- ☐ Judaism
- ☐ Islam
- ☐ Buddhism

2. Which of these facts about Shavuot are true? Tick **two**.

- ☐ It is celebrated seven weeks after Passover.
- ☐ The festival lasts for three days.
- ☐ The word Shavuot means 'weeks'.
- ☐ It celebrated in the winter.

3. God gave someone the Torah. Who was it? Tick one.

- ☐ Shavuot
- ☐ Samuel
- ☐ Moses
- ☐ David

4. Fill in the missing words.

Shavuot is a celebration of God giving the \_\_\_\_\_ people the Torah on \_\_\_\_\_ more than 3,300 years ago.

5. Find and copy one phrase which shows that God will love them forever.

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6. Why are the synagogues decorated with flowers?

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7. Summarise what you have learnt about Shavuot in 25 words or fewer.

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# Year 3 Reading Activities

## The Story of Icarus

King Minos looked out of the window and spotted the boat that his messenger had just mentioned. He had been told about a man who was on board. The man was a genius who could invent anything you asked for.



When Daedalus arrived on the island of Crete, he was taken to the palace and asked to become the King's master craftsman. "I need you to invent something for me," said the King.

"I need a prison that can trap a Minotaur."

Immediately, Daedalus started work. Helped by his son, Icarus, they built a giant maze. When it was finished, the Minotaur was captured and locked away inside. The people of Crete celebrated and thought that Daedalus and Icarus were heroes.



Then, a man called Theseus asked Daedalus for help. He explained that he wanted to slay the Minotaur but that he would need Daedalus to guide him through the maze. Thinking that

slaying the Minotaur would make him famous, Daedalus agreed to help. The two completed their mission and escaped the maze. Immediately, Theseus fled back to Athens. Daedalus was surprised by the hero leaving and began to worry that he had made a terrible mistake.



Meanwhile, King Minos was furious that Daedalus had broken into the maze so he locked Daedalus and Icarus inside. Daedalus was now trapped inside the maze that he had created. As he hadn't planned his route, it was impossible to find the entrance again.

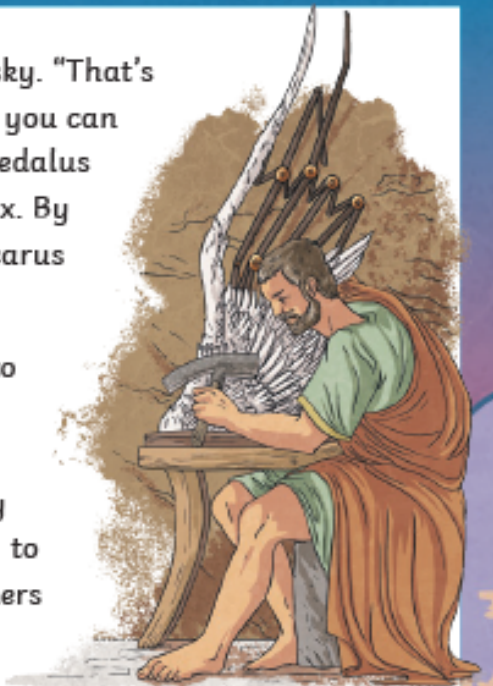
# Year 3 Reading Activities

One day, Daedalus saw some birds flying high in the sky. "That's it!" he shouted to Icarus, "Bring me every feather that you can find." When Icarus had collected enough feathers, Daedalus carefully stuck them to large wooden frames using wax. By the next day, Daedalus had made both himself and Icarus a huge pair of wings.

"Before we escape," warned Daedalus, "I need you to listen carefully. There are two rules that you must follow. The first is that you must not fly too close to the sea. If the feathers get wet, they will be too heavy to fly. The second is that you must not fly too close to the sun. If you do, the wax which holds the feathers together will melt. Do you understand?"

Icarus nodded and the two began to beat their wings. Higher and higher they rose. Daedalus looked at his son, who was flying like an eagle, and felt proud. They had escaped.

Icarus looked around and realised that he was closer to the gods than any human had ever been. Amazed by this thought, he forgot his father's warning and began to fly higher. He was now too close to the sun. The wax began to melt. With no feathers, Icarus began to spiral down towards the sea. Suddenly, he hit the surface with a crash and was never seen again.



# Year 3 Reading Activities

## The Story of Icarus

### Questions

1. What does King Minos ask Daedalus to invent? Tick one.

- ☐ a boat
- ☐ a toy
- ☐ a prison
- ☐ a throne

2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they happened in.

- ☐ Daedalus builds a giant maze.
- ☐ Daedalus and Icarus escape using wings.
- ☐ Daedalus arrives in Crete.
- ☐ Theseus asks Daedalus to help him to slay the Minotaur.

3. Draw four lines and complete each sentence.

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| Daedalus has a son called...               | Minotaur.         |
| Daedalus was asked to become the King's... | master craftsman. |
| Icarus flew too close to the...            | Icarus.           |
| The giant maze trapped the...              | sun.              |

4. When Icarus is flying, what did Daedalus think that he looked like? Tick one.

- ☐ an eagle
- ☐ a god
- ☐ a blackbird
- ☐ a hero

5. Look at the first paragraph. Find and copy one word which means the same as **really clever**.

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6. Why did the feathers fall from Icarus's wings?

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7. Would you like to try a pair of Daedalus's wings? Explain your answer.

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# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Florence Nightingale

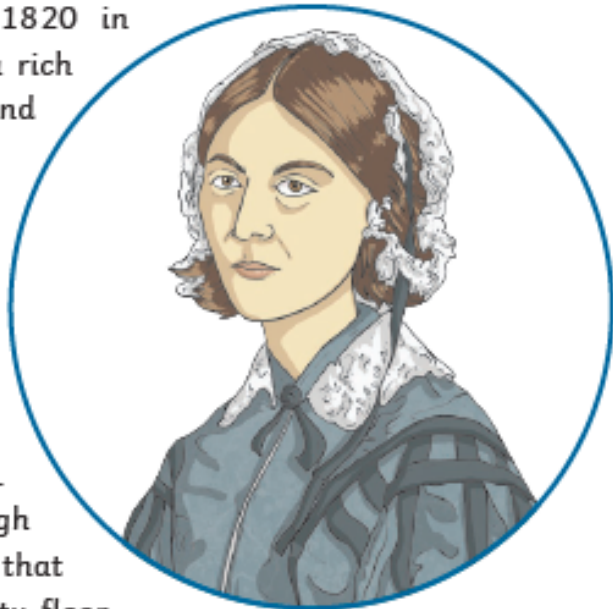
Florence was born on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1820 in Florence, Italy. She was born into a rich family and they moved to England in 1821.

As a young woman, Florence heard God telling her to care for others, so she became a nurse.

### Florence and the Crimean War

The war began in 1853 and Florence was keen to go and help. At the hospital, there weren't enough medicines or beds, which meant that some soldiers had to rest on the dirty floor.

Men were dying from infections, food was mouldy and there were no toilets, which caused a terrible smell. Florence and the other nurses cleaned the hospital and made sure they washed their hands to stop spreading germs. Florence also organised better food for the soldiers. These changes helped to save many lives.



### Did You Know...?

Florence was given a nickname by the soldiers. They called her 'The Lady with the Lamp' because she walked around the wards at night with her lantern.

### Meeting the Queen

Florence told Queen Victoria about the problems with the Army hospitals. The Army started training doctors and conditions in hospitals got better.

### Later in Life

The Nightingale Training School was set up in 1860 and started training nurses.

In 1883, Florence was given the Royal Red Cross by Queen Victoria. She died in London on 13<sup>th</sup> August, 1910.



# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Questions

1. In which country was Florence born?

- ☐ England
- ☐ Ireland
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Spain

2. Florence became a...

- ☐ doctor
- ☐ nurse
- ☐ soldier
- ☐ vet

3. List **three** things that were wrong with the hospital she worked in during the war.

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4. She was known as 'The Lady with the...

- ☐ lamb
- ☐ medicine
- ☐ love
- ☐ lamp

5. When did the Crimean War begin?

- ☐ 1843
- ☐ 1854
- ☐ 1845
- ☐ 1853

6. Who was queen during most of Florence Nightingale's life?

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Proud of something you've done?

Need help?

Contact Miss Potts at

Don't forget you can also share it with me!

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# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Doorstep Wildlife

Even if you live in a busy town or city, wildlife will be all around you, you just have to look to find it! If you search hard enough, you will probably find signs of **urban** creatures in your street, on your school playing field, through your window, at the park or in any busy, built-up space. Let's take a closer look at just some of the animals and birds that manage to survive in our towns and cities...

### Foxes

There are around 33,000 foxes living in urban areas in the UK. They are mammals, about the size of a small dog, with red fur and bushy tails. They are the most common wild **carnivore** found in our towns and cities mainly because they eat almost anything, including:

- food from dustbins, bird tables and compost heaps;
- wild mammals;
- birds;
- earthworms;
- beetles;
- fruit.

Foxes are mostly **nocturnal** animals but they are often seen in urban areas during the day. Sadly, many foxes are killed each year on busy roads.



### Hedgehogs

Hedgehogs can be found in almost all urban areas of the UK, except some areas of Scotland. The spiky mammals live in nests under hedges, where lots of insects and other **invertebrates** can be found. The hedgehog is often called the 'gardener's friend' as it loves eating small creatures, such as caterpillars, slugs and snails, which can often damage garden plants. Hedgehogs have sharp quills on their back. When they feel threatened, they contract two large muscles in their back. This causes these quills to straighten out. At the same time, the hedgehog also curls up into a ball, tucking its face and legs into its belly. This protects it from potential danger. Sadly, the number of hedgehogs has gone down a lot in the last 60 years. It is thought that there are just one million hedgehogs left in the UK.



### Did You Know...?

You should never feed hedgehogs milk as it can cause them to become very sick. Instead, try and give them fresh water in a shallow bowl along with tinned dog or cat food.

# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Doorstep Wildlife

### Pigeons

Pigeons are stout-bodied birds of the Columbidae family and are likely to be one of the most common birds within the UK. They have a cooing call, which is a very familiar sound within most busy cities and town centres. They often eat food from pavements and litter bins, as well as eating insects, seeds and food from bird feeders in urban gardens. Pigeons are often called **vermin** because many people believe that:

- they spread illness;
- they damage houses and buildings;
- their droppings (poo) are not nice to look at.



Some cities have even tried to lower the number of pigeons by destroying nesting sites, removing pigeon eggs from nests and emptying litter bins more often.

### Glossary

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>carnivore</b>    | An animal that eats other creatures.  |
| <b>invertebrate</b> | An animal without a backbone.   |
| <b>nocturnal</b>    | A creature that is active at night (and may sleep during daylight hours).                 |
| <b>urban</b>        | A word to describe something that manages to survive in a busy place like a city or town. |
| <b>vermin</b>       | An animal that causes harm or damage or is difficult to control.                          |

### How Can We Help Urban Wildlife to Survive?

Over the last 30 years, the number of some urban animals has fallen because:

- there are fewer gardens, parks and fields where they can live and find food;
- patches of grass and gardens are now not connected so they find it difficult and dangerous to move around.

If you have any outdoor space or a garden, you could try to help urban animals by:

- making and hanging a simple bird feeder;
- making holes in fences;
- planting flowers and plants.

# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Questions

1. Which animal is the most common wild carnivore found in our towns and cities? Tick one.

- ☐ hedgehog
- ☐ pigeon
- ☐ fox
- ☐ badger

2. Draw **three** lines to match the urban animal to the correct fact.

hedgehogs

sometimes eat from pavements and litter bins

pigeons

are about the size of a small dog

foxes

live in nests under hedges

3. Find **three** things that pigeons might eat.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

4. Find and copy a word from the **Foxes** section of the text that means **to eat meat**.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Fill in the missing words in this sentence.

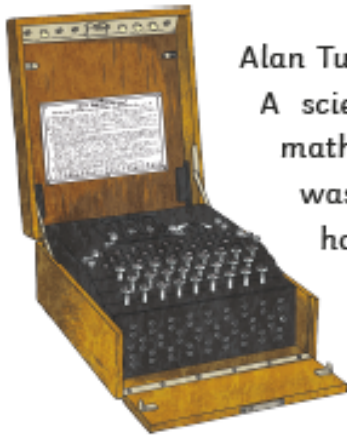
Pigeons have a \_\_\_\_\_ call, which is a very familiar sound within most busy \_\_\_\_\_ and town centres..

6. How would making holes in fences help urban wildlife?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Alan Turing



Alan Turing was a scientist, a mathematician and a codebreaker. A scientist is someone who knows a lot about science. A mathematician is someone who is very good at maths. Alan was so clever that he could use science and maths to work out how to crack codes.

### What Was Alan's Family Like?

Alan was born on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1912 in London. His dad was called Julius and his mum was called Ethel. Alan's parents spent a lot of time travelling between England and India because Alan's dad worked there. This meant that Alan and his older brother, John, spent a lot of time staying with friends of their family.

### What Was Alan like as a Child?

Alan was a very clever child who liked to solve puzzles and take on challenges. One day, Alan tracked the path of flying bees so that he could find their hive and get honey for his family.



Alan's teachers said that he was very smart for his age. When Alan was 13, he joined Sherborne School in the town of Dorset. While he was there, Alan was able to understand problems and ideas that were much too tricky for most children.

### What Did Alan Do during the Second World War?

Alan started to work at Bletchley Park when he was 27 years old. Bletchley Park was a large house where lots of codebreakers worked during the Second World War.

During the war, the German army would send lots of messages to each other that were written in code. They did this by replacing one letter with another letter lots of times. It was Alan's job to work out what the messages really said.



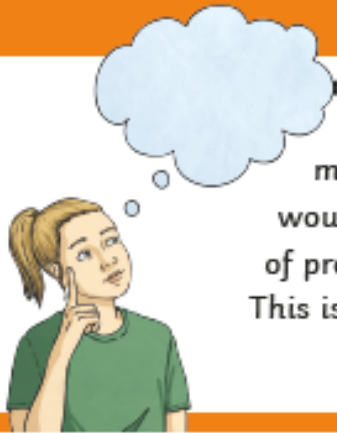
At first, Alan was using a codebreaking machine called the Enigma. However, Alan quickly made a new machine that was much better. Alan's new machine played a big part in ending the Second World War.

Alan was given a special award for his hard work by King George VI in 1946.

# Year 3 Reading Activities

Alan Turing

## Did You Know...?



Alan Turing is considered to be one of the fathers of modern computing. In 1936, he predicted that humans would one day build machines that could solve any sort of problem by storing instructional codes in their memory. This is what the modern digital computer does.

**"Those who can imagine anything, can create the impossible." – Alan Turing**

**A=Q, R=E, T=B, H=O**

# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Questions

1. In which year was Alan Turing born? Tick one.

- ☐ 1912
- ☐ 1923
- ☐ 1936
- ☐ 1946

2. Whose flight path did Alan track as a child? Tick one.

- ☐ birds
- ☐ bees
- ☐ flies
- ☐ planes

3. Number these events from 1 to 4 to show the order in which they happened in Alan's life.

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
|  | He invented a new machine.            |
|  | He joined Sherbourne School.          |
|  | He was given a special award.         |
|  | He started to work at Bletchley Park. |

4. Draw four lines and complete each sentence.

|                   |
|-------------------|
| Alan's dad...     |
| Alan's parents... |
| Alan and John...  |
| Alan...           |

|                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| stayed with family and friends. |
| worked at Bletchley Park.       |
| worked in India.                |
| spent a lot of time travelling. |

5. How old was Alan when he started to work at Bletchley Park?

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# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Beach Habitat

Habitats are environments that plants and animals live in. Habitats provide animals and plants with three important things: food, water and shelter.



### Types of Coastal Habitats

- beaches
- sand dunes
- rocky shores
- cliffs
- muddy estuaries
- seaside towns and cities

### What You Might Find in a Beach Habitat?

Beaches are important habitats for many animals and plants, including:

**Mammals** – harbour (common) seals, grey seals, harbour porpoise and otters;

**Birds** – oystercatchers, puffins, guillemots, curlews and seagulls;

**Minibeasts** – mussels, shore crabs, hermit crabs, shrimp, prawns, starfish, common whelks, dog whelks and razor shells;

**Plants** – seaweed, sea holly, marram and sea lettuce.



### How Are the Creatures Suited to Live Here?

Oystercatchers have long, strong, flattened, red bills which they use to break open cockles, mussels and other shellfish to eat. Puffins use their wings to help them swim and dive for fish. Harbour seals can hold their breath for up to 10 minutes. Otters have webbed feet which help them swim well and they use their tails to propel, steer themselves and to balance.

### What Could We Do to Help Look after Our Beaches?

We need to keep a safe distance away from animals. We also need to leave the shells at the beach instead of taking them away. We should take our litter home to put in the bin. We should also take photos of plants and flowers instead of picking them.



# Year 3 Reading Activities

## Questions

1. What do animals and plants need from their habitat?

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2. Tick two different coastal habitats.

- ☐ sand dunes
- ☐ rainforest
- ☐ muddy estuaries

3. What is a porpoise?

- ☐ a plant
- ☐ a mammal
- ☐ a minibeast

4. Complete the sentence.

\_\_\_\_\_ have long, strong, flattened, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ eat.

5. Which do you think is the most important thing we can do to look after our beaches and why?

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Proud of something you've done?

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Don't forget you can also share it with me!

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