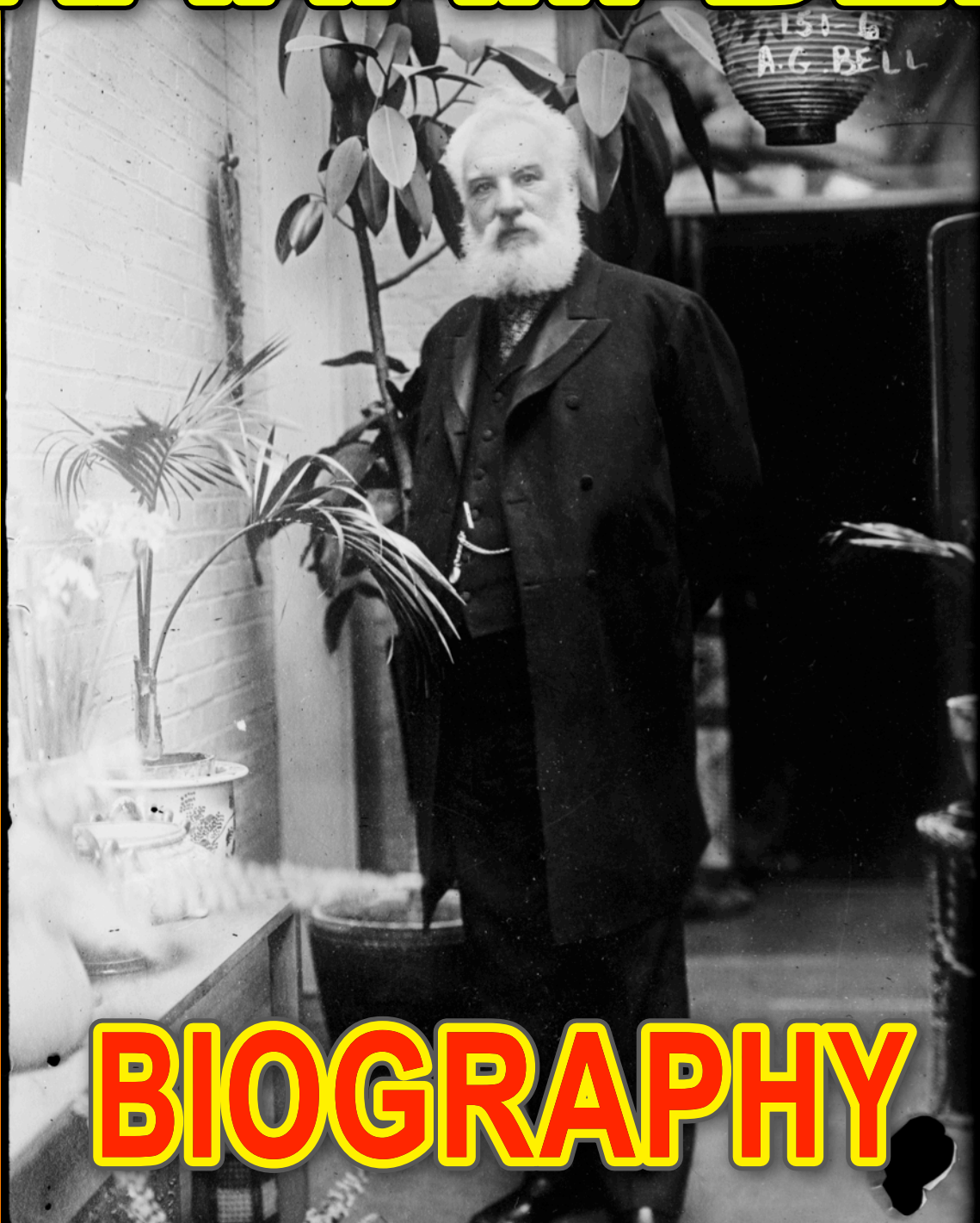


# ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL



## BIOGRAPHY

# ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL

Alexander Graham Bell was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, on March 3, 1847. He was interested in speech and communication from an early age, because his father worked in speech therapy, and his mother was partially deaf.

As a teenager, Bell went to London and worked with the deaf alongside his father. But just as he was gaining a good reputation in London, his family wanted to move to America. This was because Bell's father had traveled to America and found the air healthier than in polluted London. Alexander Graham Bell was reluctant to leave at first. But then his brothers caught tuberculosis, and he could see why they needed to move.

The Bells settled in Ontario, Canada in 1870. Before long, Alexander Graham Bell had moved to Boston. He was still working on speech and communication. He began to focus on telegraph messages, and then the idea of transmitting speech through wires.

Bell asked an electrician, Thomas Watson, to work for him. Bell came up with ideas for how a voice transmitter, or telephone, could work, and Watson put the ideas into practice to test them. Meanwhile, Bell's investors got a patent for the idea of a telephone because they could see it would change the way people communicate forever.

On March 10, 1876, something amazing happened. While working on a telephone in his workshop, Bell spoke to Watson, who was in another room. The message was "Mr. Watson – Come here – I want to see you", and Watson heard it. The first successful telephone call had been made.

After this success, Bell founded the Bell Telephone Company, and demonstrated his invention to the world. Other inventors claimed to have invented the telephone before Bell, but Bell's patent protected him. Bell also worked with the likes of Thomas Edison to improve the telephone design. They added a microphone so people could talk at normal volume over the telephone.

Bell handed over control of the business to others, as he was more interested in research. While the telephone network in America grew ever larger, Bell opened the Volta Laboratory, and continued to research into helping deaf people. In 1915, Bell spoke from New York to Watson, who was in San Francisco. It was the first telephone call across the American continent. Bell died in Canada in 1922.

# Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'speech'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'speech' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'speech'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'speech'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'speech' means.

# Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: demonstrated	showed

# Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

Bell and his assistant, Thomas Watson, experimented with different designs.

Then Alexander Graham Bell moved to Boston to work on a machine to transmit human speech through wires.

In the 1870, the Bell family moved to North America, settling in Canada.

Alexander Graham Bell was born in Scotland in 1847.

The telephone become hugely popular, while Bell set up a laboratory to continue research into speech and communication.

Bell was interested in speech and communication from an early age.

In 1870, Bell had finally made a working telephone.

# Get to the facts

- 1 What was Alexander Graham Bell interested in from an early age?
- 2 When did the Bell family settle in Canada?
- 3 Who worked for Alexander Graham Bell as an electrician?
- 4 When was the first telephone call made?
- 5 Which laboratory did Bell open?

# Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

## The first telephone call

Imagine you are Thomas Watson in 1876. You are working on something in your room, when you suddenly hear the voice of Alexander Graham Bell over the telephone...(now complete the story)

**Below is a plain text version for printing:**



## Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'speech'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'speech' means.
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## Finding key words:

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – demonstrated                      Synonym – showed

## Sequencing:

Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense:

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## **Make a story...**

### **The first telephone call**

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