

7. The Scientist and The Man

Have you heard of the great scientist, Albert Einstein? He is considered to be one of the greatest geniuses that ever lived. He is known for his Theory of Relativity.

One day, when Albert Einstein was a small boy, his father brought him a compass. It was a small toy to entertain him. Albert trembled with excitement as he looked at the 'magic' needle turning towards the north. He was too young to understand the principle of magnetism, yet he felt that he was in an enchanted world. For him, the compass was not a toy but a miracle.

He felt the same way when he played the violin. His eyes lit up and his hands shook. He was overcome with emotions. It was the music that moved him. Very often, he would stand spellbound while his mother played the piano.

He was a curious child and would often daydream. His father was pained about the reports from his teacher. They told him that the boy was not interested in his studies and making friends. He was lost and adrift forever in his foolish dreams. But Albert was unaware of the worry of his elders.

He was full of joy and regarded the world as a wonderful place. He played in his garden or walked in the streets singing songs aloud, and was extremely happy.

His father wanted him to study electrical engineering, but he disliked the very thought of becoming an engineer. He entered the Zurich Polytechnic Academy to prepare himself for a teaching position in mathematics and physics. Though he finished his studies and received his teacher's certificate, he was unable to get a job.

Finally, he got a job as a clerk. In his spare time, he filled his notebooks with difficult mathematical formulas. Some of these later led to great scientific discoveries. When they were published, the humble clerk became one of the most famous scientists in the world. He could not take his daily walk without being surrounded by photographers, reporters and autograph-hunters. He would only smile at them, and went on with his work in his quiet humble way.

In 1921, Einstein was awarded the Nobel Prize for physics for his contribution to physics and especially for his discovery of the law of the photoelectric effect.