

Walt disney



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Disney Productions is one of the biggest entertainment businesses; bringing lots of money and joy to many people. It has not always been easy for Disney. It took the mind of one intelligent man to bring it to what it is today, and that mans name is Walt Disney.

Walt Disney's life was always based on the arts and entertainment almost from birth. Walt Disney was born on December 5, 1901 and was one of the five children of Elias and Flora Disney. He was a talented boy, showing great creativity at such a young age. Walt began drawing pictures at the age of seven and continued till the day he died. He sold these drawings to his neighbors to make money. Walt began drawing pictures in the 1st grade and continued until the day he died. Another one of his talent was acting.

Walt's family owned a farm and were forced to sell it because of the hard times they went through. Walt dropped out of school when he was 16 and got a job as a waiter on a train line (The Disney Family Museum). Walt disney wanted to join the army, but was turned down because he was too young. Since he wanted to have some role in the war he became a volunteer with the Red Cross. Within a week he was sent overseas where he drove an ambulance and didn't return for a couple of years. His ambulance wasn't ordinary; Walt decorated it with drawings and cartoons. Walt returned to Kansas City after the war where he enrolled in art school, going against his father's wishes (The Disney Family Museum).

Leaving Kansas in 1923, Walt went to Hollywood to go to see his brother Roy and they started Disney Brother Studios together in their uncle's garage. Walt soon made a deal with a distributor, M. J. Winkler, in New York for the Alice Comedies. Walt and his brother rented a room at the back of a real

estate office and filmed there. Ub Iwerks, a childhood friend of Walt's also moves to California and joins Disney Productions. Together they created many different short animations including the birth of Mickey Mouse. (The Disney Family Museum) “ He popped out of my mind onto a drawing pad 20 years ago on a train ride from Manhattan to Hollywood at a time when the business fortunes of my brother Roy and myself were at lowest ebb, and disaster seemed right around the corner,” Walt penned in a 1948 essay titled “ What Mickey Means to Me.”

The disaster Walt mentioned was the brazen theft of both his successful cartoon character Oswald the Lucky Rabbit, as well as most of the Disney artists (Disney Family Museum). Mickey Mouse began as a simple sketch with a different name. The original name for Mickey Mouse was supposed to be Mortimer Mouse. Lucky for us Walt Disney's wife Lillian didn't like that name and changed it (Disney family Museum). Soon Mickey Mouse was born in 1928 when he first appeared in the black and white cartoon Steamboat Willie on November 18th. " Mickey Mouse himself never said a word until 1928 in the Karnival Kids". Walt

Disney was the original voice for Mickey Mouse until 1946 followed by Jim MacDonald. Jim MacDonald then voiced Mickey Mouse for the next 30 years. Finally, Wayne

Allwine, who is the voice of Mickey still today, was the third person to voice Mickey Mouse. In 1935's The Band Concert, Mickey Mouse made his first movie appearance in color. This led to Mickey Mouse's first full-length feature film. In 1940, Fantasia made its debut and the world met Sorcerer Mickey from the Sorcerer's Apprentice for the first time. In addition to cartoons,

Mickey Mouse also appeared on his own television show, The Mickey Mouse Club in the 1950's. Mickey Mouse has become the most well known character in the world. He is the official greeter for the Disneyland and Walt Disney World theme parks and is well loved by children and adults alike.

Soon after Walt began to envision an amusement park in which his cartoon characters could come to life and interact with the visitors (Fischer, The Creation of Disneyland). Walt wanted to make his park a unique place where adults and children could have fun together. He didn't want it to be like all the rest of the parks during that time. All the other parks had random rides, hot dog vendors littering the street, beer being sold and sanitation was not a big priority in these parks. Walt wanted his park to be different than those. He didn't want beer being sold and instead of hot dog stands the streets were filled with souvenir shops, and his parks were clean. This concept would be critical in attracting large numbers of visitors (Fischer, The Creation of Disneyland).

The uniqueness of this concept was part of the reason that it was initially difficult for Walt to get support. He struggled to find a location and sufficient funding. His brother Roy had no interest in the park, which led to an ugly split between the brothers. Walt had to find affordable land. It was also important that his park be located near a major highway. In August of 1953, Disney and his partners selected a 160-acre orange grove in Anaheim, California to be the site of Disneyland. The construction of Disneyland began during the summer of 1954 (Fischer, The Creation of Disneyland). During the first week of the opening, there were many disasters occurring. Walt, however learned from the disastrous first couple of weeks. He in fact

made a special effort to incorporate all water fountains, restrooms, and waste containers into the theme of each land in the park. In response to the complaints about security personnel, Walt replaced all park staff with employees who had been properly taught the Disney tiquette at "Disneyland University."

As for the problems with money and tickets, Walt decided to sell tickets by a classified letter system. Different tickets entitled the guests to different levels of attractions. This helped to spread the crowds across the entire park. It also eliminated the problem of carrying money to each ride. Following a shaky start, Walt and his dream park were quickly gaining stability. (Fischer, The Creation of Disneyland) Within the first six months of operations, Disneyland welcomed over one million visitors. From there the attendance figures kept climbing. Four million people passed through the turnstiles in 1956. In July of 1965, 10 years after opening, Disneyland hosted its 50 millionth guest. The ten-year visitor total was equal to one quarter of the United States population. Americans were embracing the idea of an idealized amusement park, and they were embracing it in masses (Adams, 96). All this soon came to an end when Walt Disney became sick.

Walt's neck had been bothering him for along time, and he had been getting frequent treatments from the studio's nurse, Hazel George. But in late 1966, he finally decided that he would have surgery and fix the problem that an old polo injury caused. In routine X rays, doctors found a lump on his lung about the size of a walnut. Surgery was scheduled for November 11, 1966. Walt played this down, assuring his family that it wouldn't be anything of consequence and that they shouldn't be concerned. The doctors had

removed Walt's left lung. " Well, it was just as I suspected," the surgeon told the family. " The tumor had metastasized; I give him six months to two years." Clearly, years and years of smoking had taken their toll. He stayed in the hospital for a couple of weeks and had radiation therapy, but he grew too weak for that and was released. He wanted to go to their home in Palm Springs. But the very first thing he did, on November 21, 1966, was to call his secretary and arrange to be picked up and brought to the studio (The Walt Disney Family Museum).

Walt was back in the hospital and he even celebrated his birthday, December 5, there. Lilly, Walt's wife, had difficulty accepting the reality of these days. She seemed to remain convinced that it was only a matter of time before he'd be back at home with her. Meanwhile, Walt was barely eating and slept a great deal of the time. " Walt was so wonderful today," she told Diane on December 14. " He was so strong, I know he's going to get better. Next morning, a call came from the hospital, saying Walt had taken a turn for the worse. When Diane and Lilly got there, Diane recalled, " I saw Ron go striding right into Dad's room and then come out with his arms up as though someone had pushed him back. And when we went into the room, Dad's hands were on his chest, and he was gone". " Uncle Roy was standing at the foot of his bed, and he was massaging one of Dad's feet," she added, " just kind of caressing it, and he was talking to him, you know. And, I don't know, it sounded something like, ' Well, kid, this is the end, I guess" (Disney Family Museum).

In the end we see that Walt Disney in an inspiration for all of us, Walt teaches us that we have to follow our dreams. Even when all odds were

against him, he still found a way to follow his dreams. He taught us many things and I hope we remember this man not only for his cartoons, but also for the great life he had and for the way he was. I enjoyed researching because it taught me how to see whether a website is reliable or not. Researching was helpful because it gave me lots of information that I didn't know.