



Hans Christian Andersen

Hans Christian Andersen is a writer from Denmark. He is famous for his fairy tales. Hans Christian Andersen wrote *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *The Little Mermaid*, *The Snow Queen*, *The Princess and the Pea*, and many other famous stories.

Hans Christian Andersen was born in 1805, exactly 200 years ago. This year people in Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark are celebrating a big birthday party for Hans Christian Andersen.

Hans Christian Andersen's stories are famous all around the world. This year there are exhibitions and celebrations in many countries because of this 200th anniversary.

The story of *The Ugly Duckling* is a story about a little duckling. (A duckling is a young duck.) He was bigger than the other ducklings and he was ugly. He did not have yellow feathers like the other ducklings in the lake. His feathers were grey and ugly. The little ugly duckling was very unhappy. The other duckling said "you are ugly! You must go away from the lake!" So the Ugly Duckling went away. He stayed alone for a long time. Later he came back to the lake. The ducklings said "Hello, you are a beautiful swan!" The Ugly Duckling looked at his reflection in the lake. He was a swan! A beautiful white swan.!

When Hans Christian Andersen was a young boy he was big and ugly, like the Ugly Duckling. He was tall and he had a very big nose. His friends made jokes about his big nose. Hans Christian Andersen came from a poor family in Odense, a small town in Denmark. His father was a shoemaker, he made shoes for people. His father was not a clever man, but he loved going to the theatre. Hans Christian Andersen loved going to the theatre with his father.

Hans Christian Andersen's father died when Hans was 11 years old in 1816. The boy had no money. He worked as a tailor making clothes. Hans went to Copenhagen when he was 14. He tried to get work in the theatre.

The director of the theatre was a kind man. He gave money so Hans could go to school. After that Hans went to the university in Copenhagen. After university, Hans started to write books and plays for the theatre. He started travelling to different countries and writing books about his adventures. He went to Paris and he met Alexander Dumas, the author of *The Three Musketeers* and *The Count of Monte Cristo*. He travelled to London and he met Charles Dickens, the author of *Oliver Twist* and *David Copperfield*. He also travelled to Asia and America.

His fairy stories were translated into many languages and Hans Christian Andersen, the poor ugly boy from Odense became very famous. *The Ugly Duckling* became a swan!





PENGUIN DOSSIERS

When Hans Christian Andersen died the city of Copenhagen put up a statue of the Little Mermaid in Copenhagen Harbour.

In 1952 there was a musical film about Hans Christian Andersen with an American actor called Danny Kaye. In 2001, Walt Disney made a film of the Little Mermaid.

