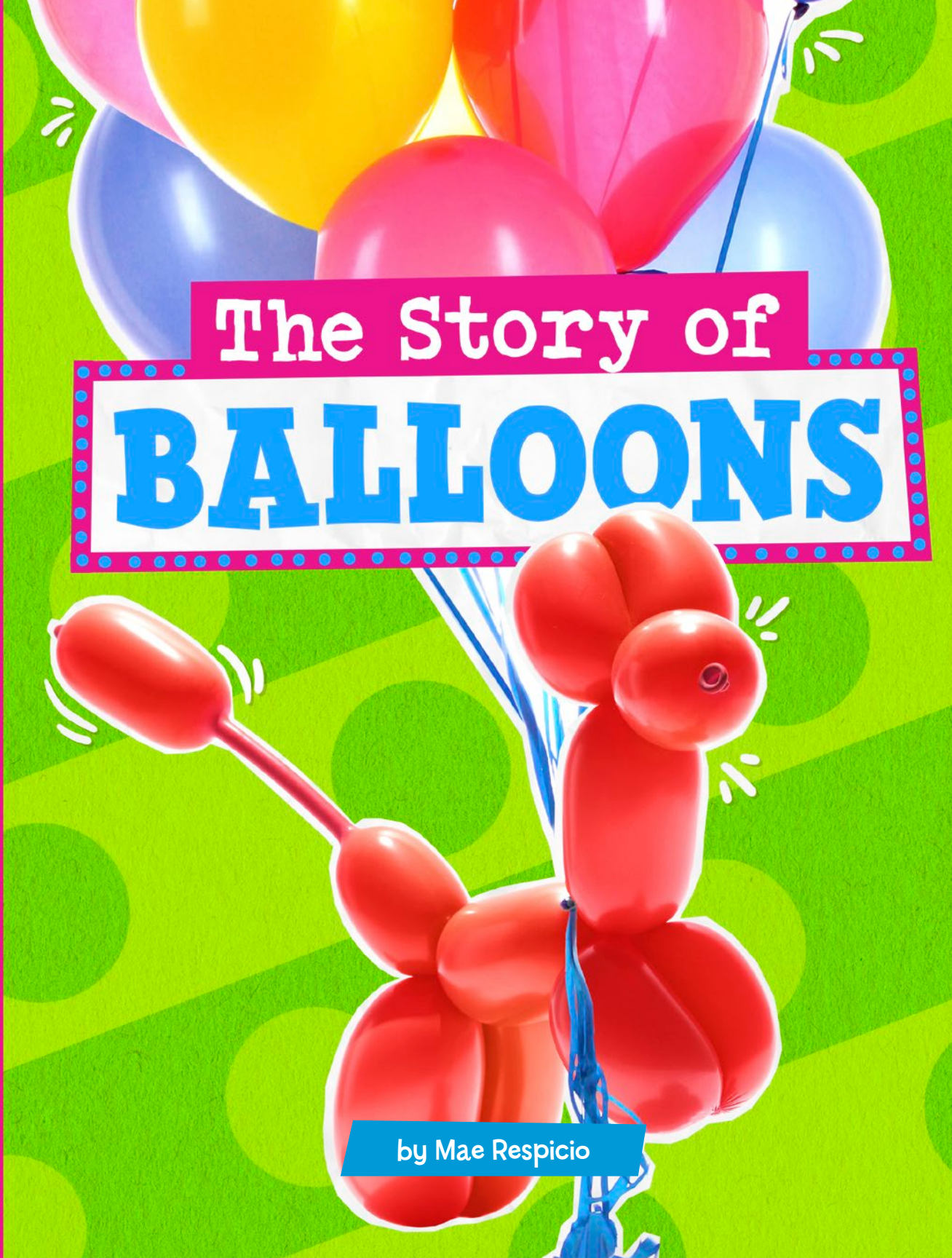




The Story of **BALLOONS**

by Mae Respicio

Table of Contents

Early Balloons	4
How Balloons Were Born	8
How Balloons Are Made Today	14
How Balloons Reach Us	22
Keep it Up!	28
Glossary	30
Read More	31
Internet Sites	31
Index	32
About the Author	32

Words in **bold** appear in the glossary.

Early Balloons

They're bright. They're bouncy.
They float. They pop. We're talking
about balloons!

Balloons come in all shapes and
sizes. They help people celebrate.
They make people smile. They can
even carry people through the sky!
But how did balloons come to be?



The earliest balloons were made from animal bladders. They were first dried out. Then they were filled with air. In the 1300s, the Aztecs made balloon sculptures from cat **intestines**. They were presented as sacrifices to the Aztec gods.

Most balloons today are made from latex, mylar, and foil. They're usually filled with gas such as helium, oxygen, or air. Balloons can also be filled with water.

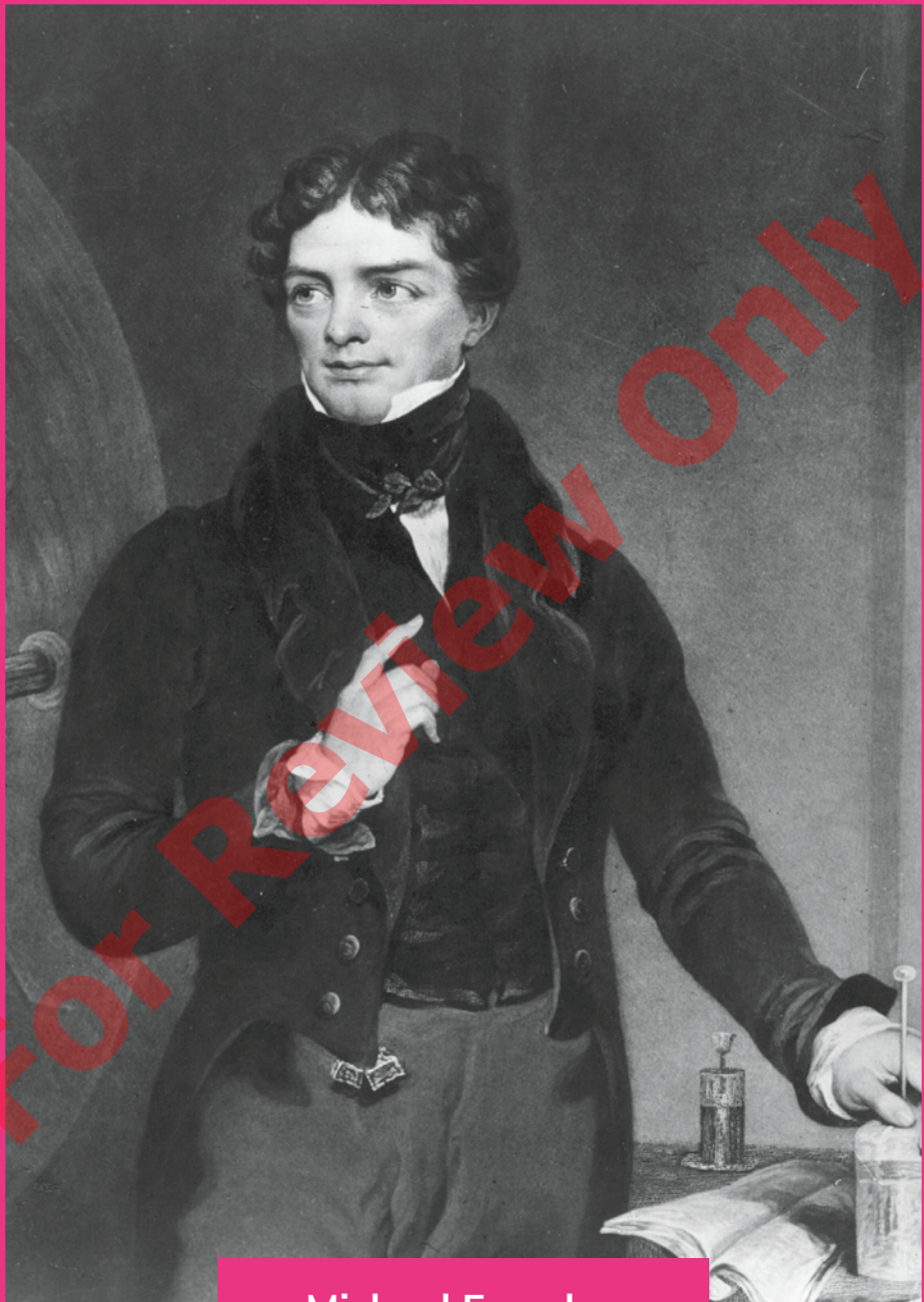


A child blows up an animal bladder.

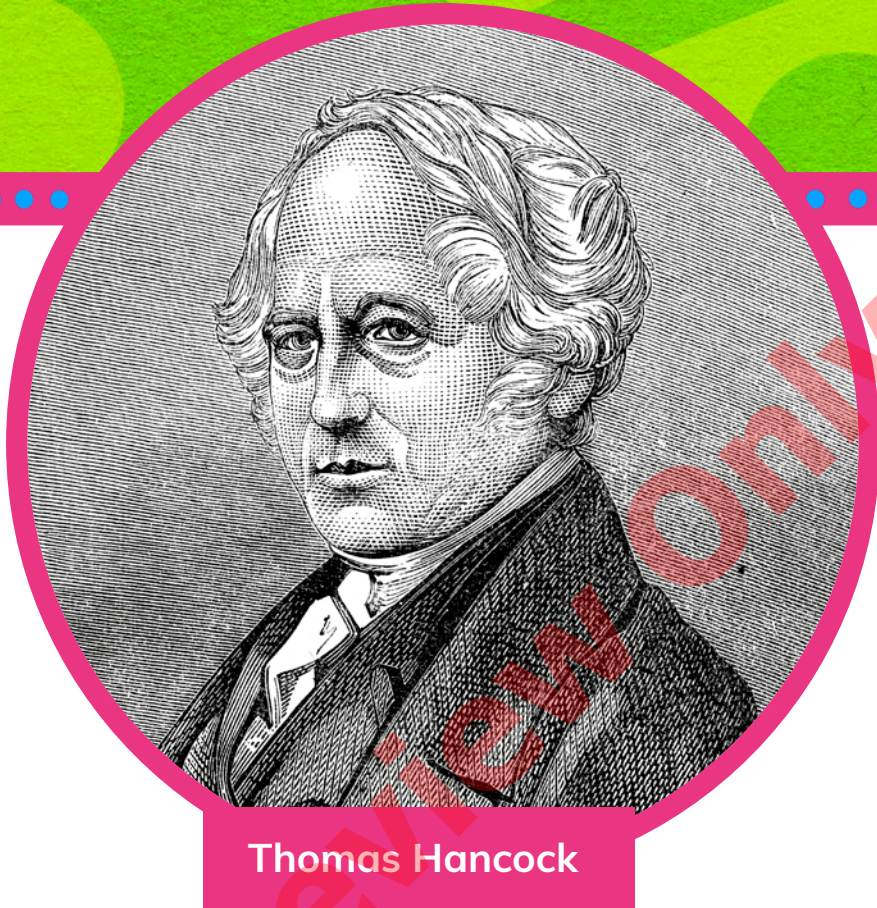
How Balloons Were Born

Michael Faraday was a professor in London. In 1824, he had an idea. He put together two round, rubber sheets. The sheets were coated inside with flour. This kept them from sticking together.

Faraday then sealed the sheets. He filled the middle with hydrogen gas. What happened? It rose! It was the first rubber balloon.



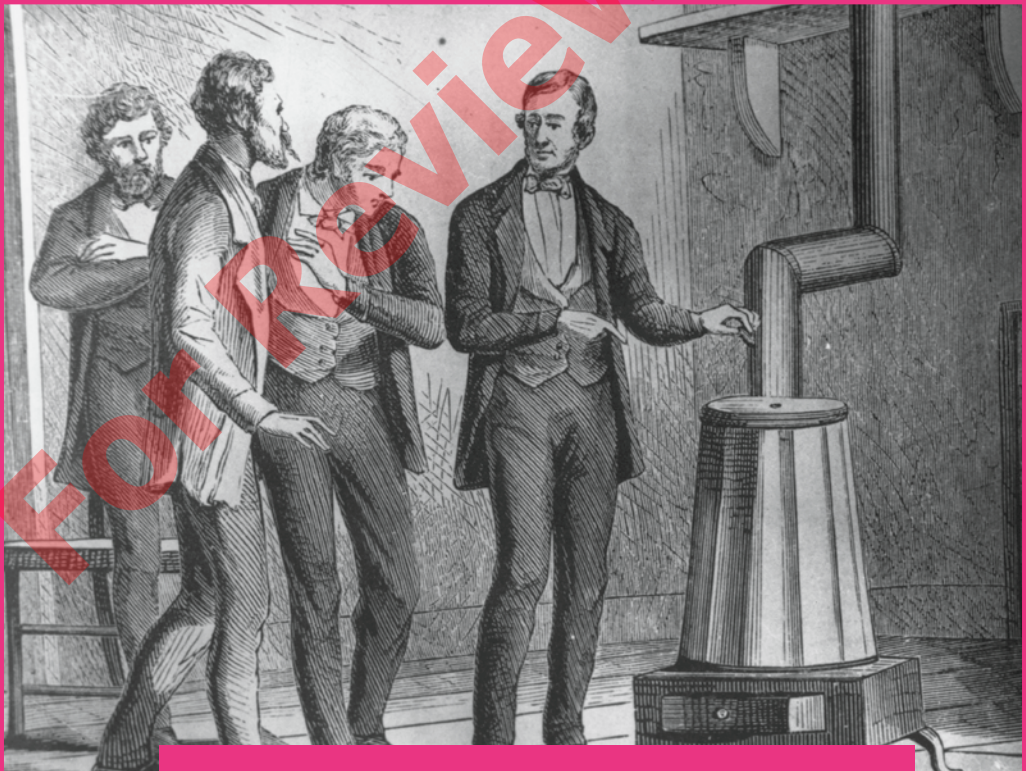
Michael Faraday



Thomas Hancock

A year later, British businessman Thomas Hancock sold balloon kits. He also created a balloon-making process using molds. Before long, people began using balloons at parties.

In 1839, Charles Goodyear made a new type of rubber. J.G. Ingram in London designed a balloon **prototype** in 1847. It was made from the new rubber. Eventually, it became the toy balloon we know today.



Charles Goodyear (right) showing how the new rubber is made.

Round, rubber balloons were first made in the United States around 1907. They became very popular.

The first non-round balloons were made in 1912. They looked like long noodles. People began twisting these balloons into shapes in the 1930s.

A man makes balloon animals in London, England, in 1966.

