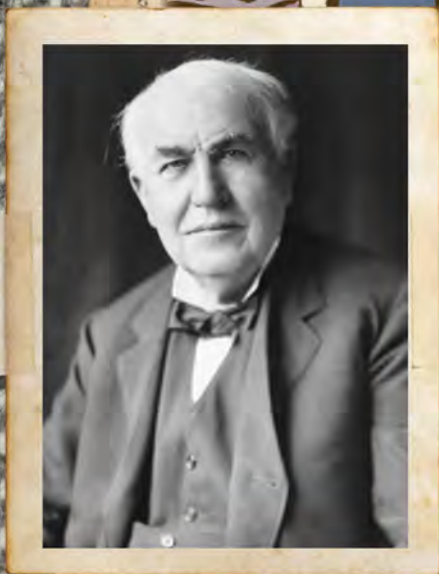


Before They Were Famous

Thomas Edison



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Train Rides



Thomas Edison
was very happy.
He was only 12
years old, and
already he was
running his own
business.

ALL
ABOARD!



And this business was always on the move. Why? Because it was based on a train that ran 100 miles (160 kilometers) from Port Huron, Michigan to Detroit, Michigan.

Fun Facts

Alva, shortened to Al, was Thomas Edison's middle name.



Al, as Thomas was known, was a familiar face to the train passengers. He rode the train most days, earning money by selling candy and vegetables.



Fun Facts

Thomas Edison was the youngest of seven children.

Samuel Edison



Nancy Edison

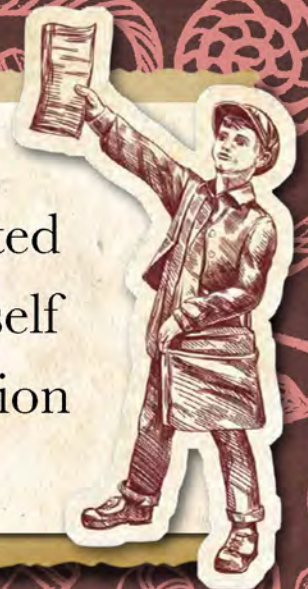


Thomas Edison,
age 3



Family Tree

Later, he also sold the *Grand Trunk Herald*, a newspaper he wrote and printed about the news of the day. The news itself he copied from information sent to station offices along the train route.



An Unusual Education

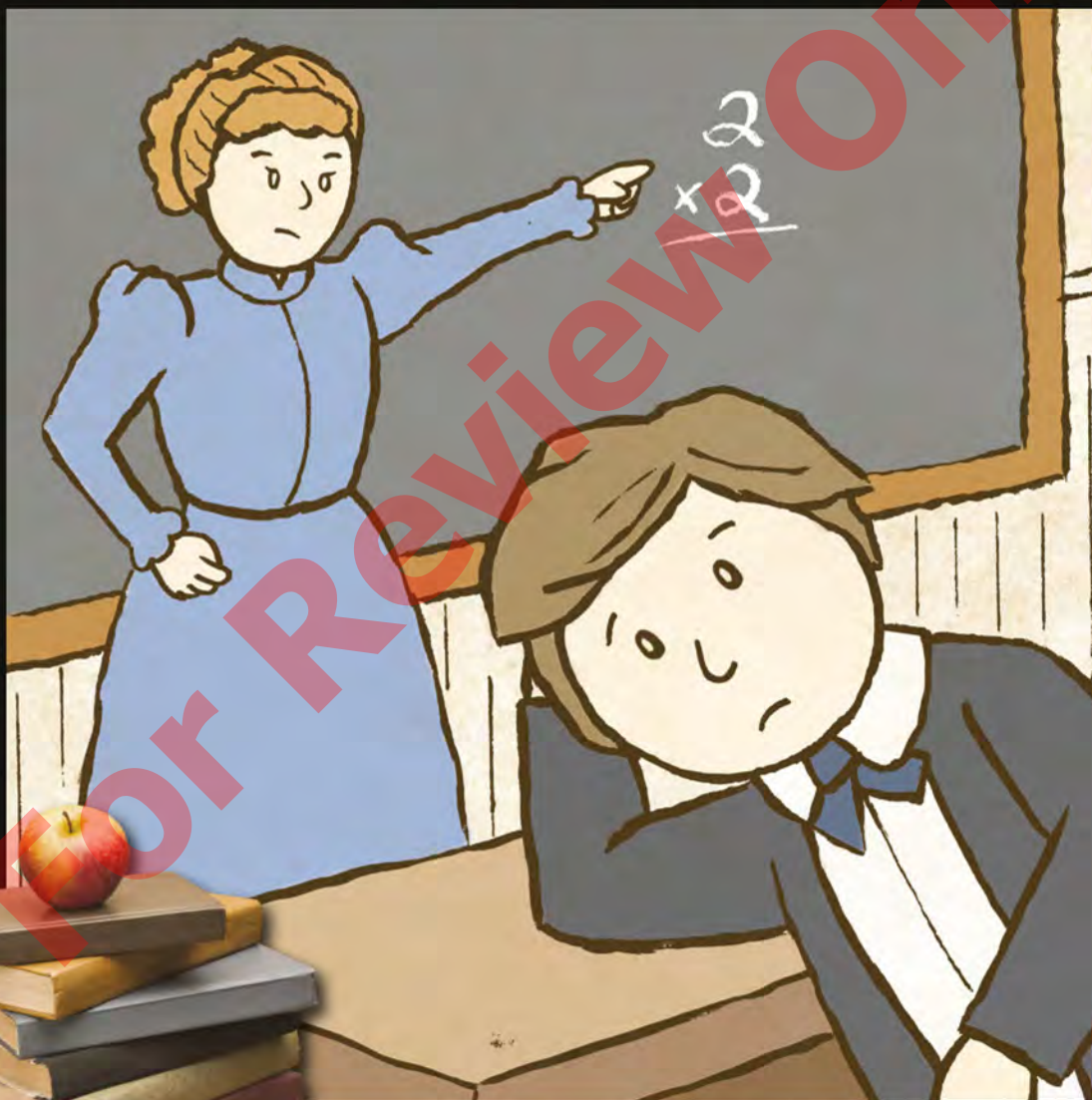
Al had plenty of time to spend on the train because he wasn't in school. Actually, he had only gone there for a few months when he was younger. Al was curious and imaginative, but he found it difficult to sit still and pay attention at school.

Fun Facts

Al had a harder time at school because he was partially deaf. He had been sick with several ear infections and **scarlet fever**.



His teacher had trouble dealing with him. She said he was unable to focus on his studies and easily distracted.





Fun Facts

Edison was paid \$40,000 (equal to more than \$800,000 today) for his stock ticker.

*Thomas Alva Edison was only 29 years old when he received a **patent** for the incandescent light bulb in 1880, the invention that made him a household name. He had already used the profits from earlier inventions to set up an inventing workshop in Menlo Park, New Jersey.*

*The Wizard of Menlo Park, as Edison came to be known, received 1,093 patents for all the inventions he created with his staff. Among them were the **phonograph** and the movie camera. Although often called a genius for his output, Edison countered this by saying, "Genius is one percent inspiration and ninety-nine percent perspiration."*

He also reportedly said, "Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

Edison died at the age of 84 in 1931.

