

Physical Science Readers: Albert Einstein: Gentle Genius

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Teacher Created Materials Publishing

5301 Oceanus Drive
Huntington Beach, CA 92649-1030
<http://www.tcmpub.com>

ISBN 978-0-7439-0572-5

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Early Life

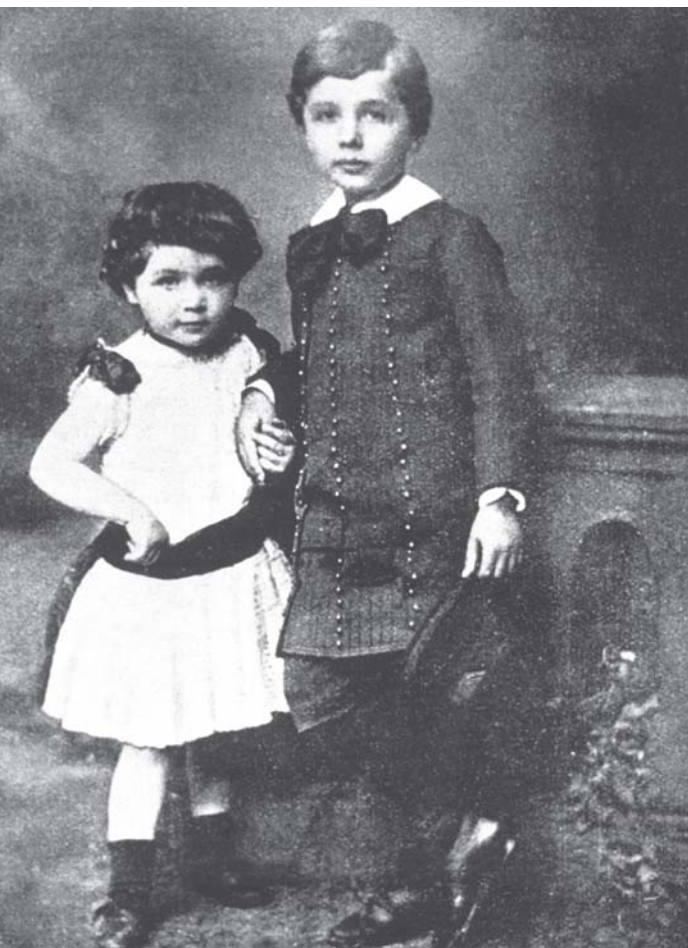
Albert Einstein may be the most famous **physicist** of all time. He is known both for his brilliant mind and his gentle spirit. He thought of things no one ever had. But he always stayed humble. He believed he was just one small part of the world, trying to figure things out.

Einstein was born in March of 1879 in Ulm, Germany. His family owned a business there. They made parts for machines. These parts helped the machines run on electricity.

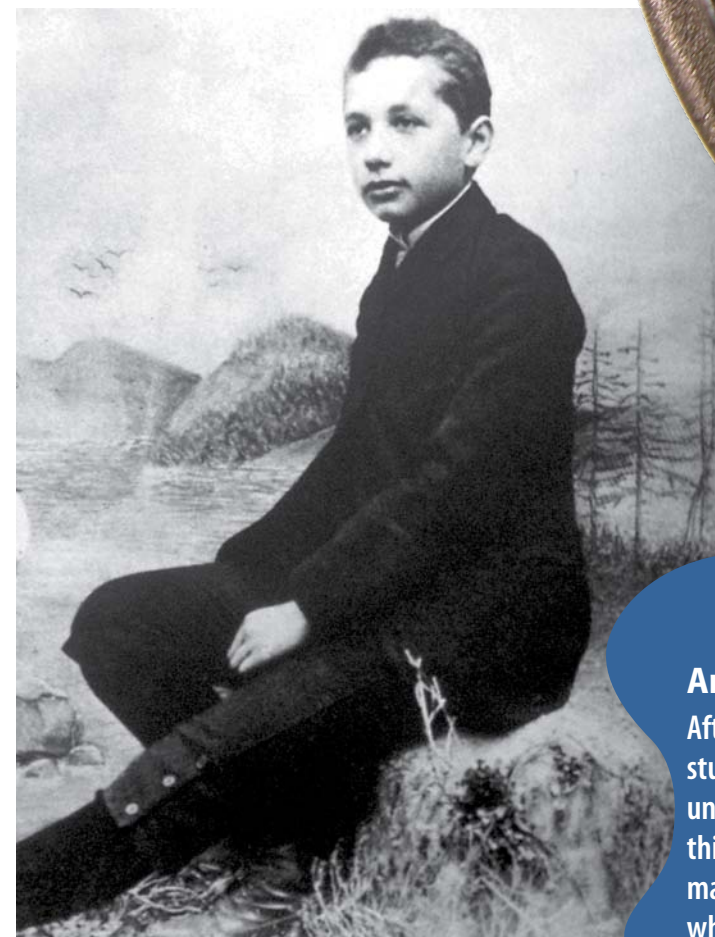
Einstein didn't talk much when he was little. Some people thought he was not smart. He later proved this was far from true.

When Einstein was five years old and sick in bed, his father showed him a compass from the shop. Einstein realized that something made the needle move. That "something" was **magnetism**. He later said that moment was very important to him. It made him want to study science. He built models and mechanical things for fun.

← Einstein, shown here with his sister Maja in about 1884, enjoyed physics-related puzzles even when he was a young boy.



He taught himself geometry by the age of 12. He was bored with regular school and often got into trouble there. He found ways to learn on his own. The family shop was a big help to his learning.



↑ Einstein as a boy



↑ A compass

Amazing Brain

After he died, Einstein's brain was studied. They found that it had an unusual shape. Some scientists think that the shape of his brain may have made him both slow when young and very smart at the same time.