

The History of the Teddy Bear



Teddy Bears

Do you have a teddy bear?

Talk to your partner about your teddy bear.

- What is its name?
- What does it look like?
- Why is it special to you?
- What sort of things do you like to do with your teddy?



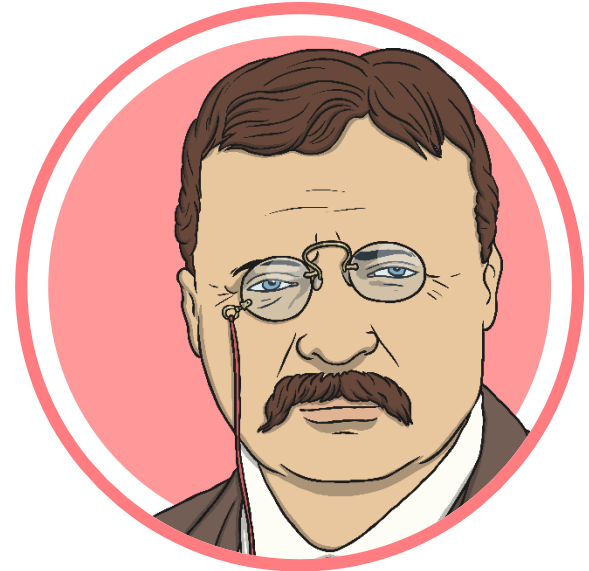
Can you think of any famous bears from television or stories?

A Bear Hunt

Theodore Roosevelt was the president of the United States from 1901 to 1909.

He was a keen hunter and one day, in November 1902, he went bear hunting.

During the hunt, some of the **guides** caught a bear and tied it to a tree. They invited the president to shoot the bear. He refused and said it wasn't fair to shoot an animal that couldn't defend itself.



guides - People who show others the way during an exploration or trek.

The First Teddy Bear

The story of Roosevelt and the bear spread across the country. A shopkeeper, called Morris Michtom, saw a cartoon about it. His wife decided to make a bear from fabric and put it in their shop window with a sign saying, 'Teddy's Bear'. Teddy is a name short for Theodore.

The Michtoms wrote a letter to the president to ask permission to use his nickname for the toy bear. The president agreed.

The Michtoms went on to start a company making teddy bears and other toys. The teddy bears were very popular and lots of people bought them.



Bears, Bears Everywhere

Around the same time, a company in Germany, that was started by **seamstress** called Margarete Steiff, began making their own bears.

The Steiff company's first bear was shown at a German toy fair in 1903. The arms and legs could be moved.

When teddy bears became popular in the US, a very big order for bears was made at the Steiff company.

Steiff bears are made from mohair and stuffed with wood shavings. They are still very popular and are often bought by **collectors** for a lot of money.



An example of a Steiff bear.

seamstress - A woman who is paid for her sewing skills.

collectors - People who collect a lot of something.

Fun Facts

In 1906, the Steiff bears were officially called teddy bears.

When Theodore Roosevelt wanted to be elected as the president again a few years later, he had a teddy bear as his mascot.

The largest teddy bear collection in the world was recorded in Hungary. In 2019, the Guinness Book of Records counted 20,367 teddy bears belonging to Istvánné Arnóczki.

The smallest teddy bear in the world is called 'Tiny Ted'. He measures only 4.5mm and is kept at the Teddy Bear Museum in South Korea.



