# PYTHAGORAS

c.560 – c.480 B.C.

Pythagoras, or Pythag as he is affectionately known, was born on the Greek island of Samos. He was an expert in Philosophy, Mathematics, Astronomy, Religion and Music and was desperate to share his ideas with people. Unfortunately, nobody was really very interested because they didn’t understand what he was talking about. In the end he paid a young boy to listen to him. The idea caught on, and Pythagoras selected 300 people to join his school.

Pythagoras was a peculiar teacher. He would hide behind a curtain and then jump out to announce a problem. He then hid for another five minutes to allow everyone to become puzzled, at which point he jumped out again to give the answer. School was so much fun in the olden days.

Pythagoras had two big theorems. The first was that all numbers were whole numbers (no fractions allowed). The second was the more famous one about right-angled triangles. In fact he stole this theorem from someone else, but he was the first to prove it. Pythagoras was so excited that he went straight out and sacrificed 100 unlucky cows. Unfortunately, the second theory disproved the first one so Pythagoras tried to cover up his mistake. When a pupil – Hippasus – leaked the information, Pythagoras had him murdered.

People became very suspicious of the Pythagorean School. It had developed into a secret brotherhood that was seen as a dodgy sect. When Hippasus was murdered, the Greek public rioted and stormed the buildings. They set fire to the School when all the members were locked inside. Many people – perhaps including Pythagoras himself - were burned to death. 2500 years later we still have to learn Pythagoras’ Theorem at school. His name lives on!