

XI Marvellous minds

- ❖ Who was Oliba Abbot? Where was he born? When did he live?
- ❖ Who was Ramon Llull? Where was he born? When did he live?

Oliba Abbot (c. 971-1046)

Oliba Abbot was the count of Berga and Ripoll and he later became the **bishop** of Vic and the **Abbot** of Sant Miquel de Cuixà. He was from a noble Catalan family but he left his possessions to be a Benedictine **monk** in Ripoll's Monastery. He was also a great writer and much work was done in Ripoll's *scriptorium*: for example Arabic scripts were translated to Latin.

He is also famous for starting the institution of **Peace and Truce of God** towards 1022 and 1027 in Tolouges, Roussillon. **Peace of God** banned violence against the church, the holy places and the poor. **Truce of God** forbade fights on Sundays and Holy days.



1. Ripoll's cloister.

1. Answer the questions.

1. In what centuries did Oliba Abbot live? _____
2. In what Monasteries did he live? _____
3. What was his job in the Monastery? _____
4. Where did Oliba Abbot travel? _____
5. Why is he famous? _____

2. Fill in the words.

Word bank

Truce Monk Bishop Abbot Peace

1. _____ is the end of war with public enemies.
2. _____ is the superior or head of an abbey.
3. _____ is a temporary end of war by agreement of the opposing sides.
4. _____ is a man who retires from the world, and devotes himself to religion; one of a religious community of men inhabiting a monastery.
5. _____ is usually the spiritual head of a diocese or see.

Ramon Llull (1232-1315)

Ramon Llull (1232? - 1315) was a Spanish (in Ciutat de Palma, Majorca) mystic, poet, and missionary. He was brought up at the court of Majorca, where he wrote poetry. Later he travelled widely and he taught in the Paris University. In the North of Africa he attempted to convert Muslims to Christianity; where he is said to have been stoned to death at Bejaïa (Tunis). As a philosopher, he is best known as the inventor of an “art of finding truth”. Llull wanted to support the church in its missionary work, and he also tried to unify all branches of knowledge. In his principal work, *Ars magna* (1305–08), he tried to describe all forms of knowledge, including theology, philosophy, and the natural sciences. His writings influenced medieval and early modern Europe. In Catalan culture, his novels *Blanquerna* (c. 1284) and *Felix* (c. 1288) are very popular; he is also known for his treatise on chivalry, his animal fables, and an encyclopaedia of medieval thought.

The *Book of the Beasts* (*Llibre de les bèsties*) is the seventh of the ten parts into which *Felix* or the *Book of Wonders* (1288-1289) is divided and it is a treatise¹. It is a reflection on politics in the form of a fable. In the plot we see some of the worst aspects of humans. Na Renard, the main character, who is a fox, ends up being victim of her own ambition.

1. Fill in a grid with Ramon Llull's life and work.

Year of birth	
Place of birth	
Countries he visited.	
Works that he wrote	
Areas of knowledge he worked.	
How did he die?	
Place of Death	
Year of death	

2. Which is a myth, which is a fable, which is a legend? Can you give an example of each?

A _____ is a traditional story based on truth but which has had bits added.

A _____ is a traditional story of gods or heroes which tries to explain why people or things are like they are.

A _____ is a short story which has been written to give a message.

¹ Treatise means essay.

3. Ramon Llull cloze text

a) What was Ramon Llull's occupation?

- He was a poet.
- He was a mystic, a poet and a missionary.
- He was a politic.

b) What were his major works?

- Bejaia.
- Ars Magna, Blanquerna and de Book of Wonders.
- Na Renard.

c) Felix or The Book of Wonders is divided into

- 7 parts.
- 3 parts
- 10 parts.

d) Ramon Llull was born in

- Ciutat de Palma (Majorca)
- Bejaia.
- Paris

e) Ramon Llull is said to have been

- Stoned to death at Bejaia (Tunis)
- Death at home.
- Nobody knows where he died.

4. Answer the following questions about Ramon Llull.²

4.1. Write the names of the cities he visited in English. _____

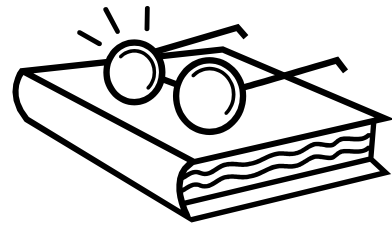
4.2 Write the names and the dates of his works. _____

² Look at the captions about Ramon Llull. <http://www.auques.cat/auques.php?auca=llull&pag=1>

Geoffrey Chaucer

Chaucer, Geoffrey (c.1343 to 1400?) was born in London. He was the son of a rich wine merchant. In 1366 he married Philippa Roet. They had 3 or 4 children. His most important work was **The Canterbury Tales**, written in the latter part of his life (c. 1387-1400). Children all over the world still read the tales at school today!

A **tale** is a narrative or story which isn't true.



1. Answer the Wh- questions:

1. Where was Chaucer born? _____
2. What was his father's job? _____
3. Was his father rich? _____
4. When did Chaucer live? _____
5. Who did he marry? _____
6. How many children did they have? _____
7. What was his most important work? _____
8. When did he write it? _____
9. Where is Canterbury? _____
10. Do children read Chaucer's tales now? _____

2. Match the Old English words used by Chaucer with the modern day words. When you have finished take the first letter of each word and unscramble the anagram to reveal Chaucer's job.

<i>Chaucer's words</i>	<i>Modern English</i>	<i>Translation</i>
1. trewe	___rust	_____
2. wydwe	___every	_____
3. ich	___read	_____
4. ruste	___widow	_____
5. everich	___I	_____
6. rede	___true	_____

ANAGRAM: _____

3. The Miller's tale- by Geoffrey Chaucer

Once there was a carpenter, who lived with his wife Alison and a student, Nicholas, who rented a room in their house. Nicholas fell in love with Alison, and she fell in love with him. But how could they spend the night together, without Alison's husband knowing about it? Well, Nicholas convinced the carpenter that in his studies he had found out that there was a second flood coming, like **Noah's** flood.

He said that to be safe from the flood, all of them should sleep in **wooden tubs**, hauled up to the ceiling with ropes. They could take knives with them, and when the Flood came they would cut the ropes and float on the water. The carpenter agreed to this plan, and that night he and Alison and Nicholas each went to sleep in their own wooden tub, up near the ceiling of the house. After the carpenter fell asleep, Nicholas and Alison sneaked out of their tubs and ... you know, on second thought, I think you'd better wait until you're older to read the Miller's Tale...

Text from History from 2Kids"Kidipede



2. Wooden tubs.

4. True / False. Correct the false sentences.

- Nicholas was a student. _____
- The carpenter rented a room in Alison's home. _____
- A tub is a wooden barrel. _____
- Ropes are cloths. _____
- Wood doesn't float on water. _____
- Alison was the Carpenter's wife. _____
- Nicholas and Alice fell in love. _____

5. Fill in the grid with some of the verbs in the text.

present	past	participle	regular/ irregular	translation
<i>Fall</i>				
	<i>sneaked</i>			
		<i>thought</i>		

6. In your notebook write a short tale about your town.

7. Draw a [timeline](#) about Geoffrey Chaucer with all the dates in the dossier. Print it at home.³

³ You can use the Timeline maker. http://www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/materials/timelines/

