



Most people like detective stories. A famous detective story writer was Conan Doyle, who was born in 1859 and died in 1930. He invented Sherlock Holmes. Sherlock Holmes seemed so real that people wrote letters to him, asking for help. His address was known: 221 B Baker Street. It was a flat which he shared for many years with his friend Dr Watson.

Why were the stories so popular? Not only because Conan Doyle could tell thrilling events. The readers

liked Sherlock Holmes as a person. He spoke little, he was a sharp observer and a clear thinker. He studied crime like a scientist. In his best stories he puts the facts before us so that we can try and solve the mystery ourselves. Moreover, Sherlock Holmes was fearless, a man of great courage. He even enjoyed danger. He was generous, a gentleman, always ready to help those who needed him and to fight evil.

In a way, Sherlock Holmes is Conan Doyle himself. For Conan Doyle was more than a teller of good stories. Before the first world war (1914 to 1918) he was one of the best known and most famous men in England, a friend of the king and of all the great statesmen of his time.

Conan Doyle had studied medicine. Yet he was a doctor for only nine years. Then he began writing books. He wrote historical novels, plays and poems. Yet he was always a man of action as well as a writer. He was a first-class sportsman. He played football and cricket, even for England. Another sport he liked was boxing. When in 1894 his wife fell ill and he spent a few months at Davos, he went skiing. He was one of the first skiers in Switzerland. He used skis that he had imported from Norway. In March he and two men from Davos climbed up to the Strela Pass, starting at half past four, and skied down to Arosa - a thing that only "a mad Englishman"

would do. He drove his first car in 1903 and learnt how to fly in 1911. In 1902 the King knighted him. His name was now Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The king wished to honour him not for the books he had written, but for the work he had done in the Boer War (1899-1902), where he was in charge of a small hospital. A terrible disease broke out, and all the hospitals were overcrowded. The chief doctor went home, as he could not stand the awful smell. So Conan Doyle took his place. He had to fight not only the disease but also the incredible stupidity of the generals. When he could get away, he went to the front to see the war.

Later he wrote a book on the war and suggested reforms. The generals did not like him.



He was now a wealthy, successful, popular man, with a beautiful house in the south of England. Yet he always gave time and money to help the oppressed, those who could not hit back. His book "Crime in the Congo" appeared in 1908 -. That was not a "thriller". He showed and attacked the terrible conditions under which the natives had to work on the rubber plantations of the "Congo Free State" - then under Belgian rule. He did much to put an end to the slavery there. He gave help to private people, too, who were in trouble or had been wrongly accused of a crime. In several cases he was a true detective himself.

**accuse:** charge, incriminate  
**Boer war:** 1899-1902 in South Africa  
**case:** legal action  
**comfortable:** cosy  
**consider:** think about  
**disease:** illness  
**enjoy:** love  
**event:** happening  
**evil:** wicked  
**fearless:** hardy  
**flat:** apartment  
**generous:** big-hearted

**in charge:** in control  
**incredible:** unbelievable  
**instead of:** rather than  
**invent:** create, discover  
**lead:** guide  
**moreover:** additionally  
**mystery:** secret  
**natives:** local  
**novel:** story  
**oppress:** keep down  
**overcrowded:** full  
**rubber:** gum, latex

**rule:** regime  
**scientist:** researcher  
**share:** part  
**solve:** answer  
**suggest:** propose  
**thrill:** kick  
**to honour:** respect  
**to knight:** to honour  
**true:** real  
**wealthy:** rich

## **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**

### **TRUE or FALSE?**

Doyle lived in Scotland. ..*FALSE*...

Conan Doyle lived at 221 B Baker Street. ....

Dr. Watson was a friend of Conan Doyle. ....

Conan Doyle was a doctor. ....

Conan Doyle was a writer. ....

Conan Doyle wrote plays and poems. ....

Sherlock Holmes fought against the British in the Boer war. ....

Conan Doyle helped the generals to win the Boer War. ....

Sherlock Holmes was a famous skier (downhill races) ....

“The Hound of the Baskervilles” was written by Arthur Conan Doyle. ....

“Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” was written by Dr. Watson. ....

Conan Doyle liked a safe and comfortable life. ....

Conan Doyle was one of the first skiers. ....

Conan Doyle was the inventor of the mobile phone. ....

Conan Doyle went to Davos because he was mad. ....

“Crime in the Congo” is one of the best detective novels by Conan Doyle. ....

Conan Doyle left South Africa because he couldn't stand the smell of the hospitals. ....

Doyle's stories were so popular because the readers liked Sherlock Holmes as a person. ....

There were rubber plantations in the Congo in 1909 where the natives had to work under terrible conditions. ....

Sherlock Holmes became Prime Minister of the UK. ....

The King of England didn't like Conan Doyle. ....

Sherlock Holmes was wrongly accused of a crime and hanged in 1930. ....

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was a real person. ....