

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Alan Turing

Learn more about this topic! Each section gives more detail on one of the lyrics from the song. Read each section, and then respond by answering the question or taking notes on key ideas.

1. b'

Alan Turing was born on June 23, 1912, in London. He became interested in mathematics and science early in life, while attending the Sherborne School, a well-regarded boarding school. Later, he attended King's College in Cambridge, England, and studied there from 1931 through 1934. He was an excellent student.

Turing earned a fellowship with King's College after graduation. During the fellowship, he wrote a paper about a theoretical Universal Machine capable of correctly solving any solvable math problem. Published all the way back in 1936, this paper laid the groundwork for modern computing, including the machines we use in our daily lives.

2. b'

Turing earned a PhD from Princeton University in New Jersey in 1938. By the time he returned to Cambridge, Nazi Germany was gaining power and influence throughout Europe, largely due to their cipher device, Enigma, that hid military messages in code. Turing began working for a British codebreaking operation during World War II. His job was to lead a team that designed a codebreaking machine known as the Bombe. During this time, Turing and his team used the Bombe to decode as many as 84,000 intercepted Nazi messages each month. This allowed the Allied Forces to better anticipate what the Nazis were planning. Many historians credit Turing and the team who created the Bombe for dramatically altering the course of the war, with some speculating that the information it yielded saved millions of lives by shortening the war.

Notes

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Turing was responsible for leading a team whose work historians speculate significantly shortened World War II and saved countless lives. But his own life ended tragically less than a decade after the war ended. Despite his heroic service to his country, he was arrested for gross indecency in 1952 for the crime of being gay. Homosexuality was still illegal in Britain at this time, and the arrest led to a criminal conviction. Turing was fired from his job with the codebreaking operation, and worse, sentenced to hormone conversion therapy, a cruel, pseudoscientific practice of hormone therapy that alleged to cure him of his homosexuality. The therapy had significant impact on Turing's mental health, and he died by cyanide poisoning at age 41. His death was ruled a suicide. In 2009, more than 50 years later, the British government finally issued an official apology for their treatment of Alan Turing.

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