

WORDS TO KNOW

cartoonist car • toon • ist
 defenseless de • fense • less
 dressmaker dress • mak • er

jointed joint • ed
 nephew neph • ew
 shopkeeper shop • keep • er

Teddy Bears

Do you have a Teddy Bear? Most children have grown up with at least one, if not many. These cute, cuddly, stuffed toys have been popular ever since they were created over 100 years ago! Who had the idea for this wonderful toy?

The name comes from the 26th President of the United States, Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt. President Roosevelt liked to hunt. One day in 1902 he was on a bear hunting trip, but couldn't find one. Finally, other people in the hunting party found a bear and tied it to a tree. But Roosevelt refused to shoot the defenseless animal. The next day, a cartoonist drew a picture of the president refusing to kill the bear. It was published in many newspapers across the country.

When Morris Michtom, a shopkeeper in Brooklyn, New York, heard this story, he got an idea. He asked his wife to make two plush stuffed bears to put in his shop's display window. He asked for and received permission from Roosevelt himself to call them "Teddy's Bears." The bears were an instant success. They later became known simply as Teddy Bears (without the "s" after Teddy).

Before then, bear toys looked more like real bears – they were fierce looking and stood on all fours. But the Teddy Bears were cute and stood upright, more like people.

Michtom wasn't the only one to come up with the idea for this kind of bear. Margarete Steiff, a dressmaker in Germany, had started a business making all kinds of stuffed animals. She used drawings that her nephew had made of bear cubs at a zoo to make a toy bear. It was jointed

(Continued on next page)

Name _____

Teddy Bears

(Continued)

like dolls and stood upright.

281

In 1903 the Steiff Company introduced its bear at a trade fair for people who buy toys to sell in shops. An American was there and thought the German toy was a lot like the Teddy Bears that were popular in the United States. So he placed an order for 3,000 Steiff bears. By the end of the year he ordered 12,000!

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Today Teddy Bears are still popular and much-loved by children everywhere. Adults often collect them. They come in all shapes, colors, and sizes. Few toys have such a long history, or such an interesting beginning!

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WORDS READ	TIME	WORDS PER MINUTE

1. How long have Teddy Bears been around? _____
2. What president is the Teddy Bear named after?

3. How were Teddy Bears different from other bear toys? _____

4. What were Teddy Bears first called? _____
5. Who was the shopkeeper in Brooklyn who sold Teddy Bears?

6. Where else were Teddy Bears made? _____
7. Describe your favorite Teddy Bear. _____

