Александр Сергеевич Пушкин
Alexander Sergeyevich Pushkin

- June 6 1799 – February 10 1837
- was a Russian author of the Romantic era who is considered by many to be the greatest Russian poet and the founder of modern Russian literature. Pushkin pioneered the use of vernacular speech in his poems and plays, creating a style of storytelling—mixing drama, romance, and satire—associated with Russian literature ever since and greatly influencing later Russian writers. He also wrote historical fiction. His *The Captain's Daughter* provides insight into Russia during the reign of Catherine the Great.
His biography & work

- Born in Moscow, Russia, Pushkin published his first poem at the age of fifteen, and was widely recognized by the literary establishment. Pushkin gradually became committed to social reform and emerged as a spokesman for literary radicals; in the early 1820s he clashed with the government, which sent him into exile in southern Russia.

- Due to his political views and influence on generations of Russian rebels, Pushkin was portrayed by Bolsheviks as an opponent to bourgeois literature and culture and a predecessor of Soviet literature and poetry. In 1937, the town of Tsarskoe Selo was renamed Pushkin in his honour.
Life and history

• Pushkin's father Sergei Lvovich Pushkin (1767–1848) descended from a distinguished family of the Russian nobility which traced its ancestry back to the 12th century. Pushkin's mother Nadezhda (Nadja) Ossipovna Gannibal (1775–1836) descended through her paternal grandmother from German, Scandinavian nobility, and a great-grandfather from central Africa, probably Cameroon.

• Ossip Abramovich Gannibal's father, i.e., Pushkin's great-grandfather, was Abram Petrovich Gannibal (1696–1781), a black page raised by Peter the Great who was born a prince of Lagon, an African tribal sultanate in present-day Cameroon. After education in France as a military engineer, Abram Gannibal became governor of Reval and eventually General-en-Chef for the building of sea forts and canals in Russia.
His influence on the Russian language

- Alexander Pushkin is usually credited with developing Russian literature. Not only is he seen as having originated the highly nuanced level of language which characterizes Russian literature after him, but he is also credited with substantially augmenting the Russian lexicon. Where he found gaps in the Russian vocabulary, he devised calques. His rich vocabulary and highly sensitive style are the foundation for modern Russian literature.

- He became the father of Russian literature in 19th century. Though his life was brief, he left examples of nearly every literary genre of his day: lyric poetry, narrative poetry, the novel, the short story, the drama, the critical essay, and even the personal letter. Pushkin's work as a journalist marked the birth of the Russian magazine culture.

- Pushkin’s intelligence, sharpness of his opinion, his devotion to poetry, realistic thinking and incredible historical and political intuition make him one of the greatest Russian national genii.

The Queen of Spades
Пиковая Дама

• *The Queen of Spades* is considered Pushkin's most successful prose work. It was published in 1834. A critical and commercial success, *The Queen of Spades* achieved widespread popularity for its striking plot and the appeal of its enigmatic protagonist, the army officer Hermann. The story has been adapted as a play, several films, and an opera by Peter Tchaikovsky.

The story...

• Hermann is an ethnic German man living and working in Russia as an engineer. A very scrupulous young man, he overhears a story one night about a countess who was able to win big at a famous card game, called Faro. He becomes so intrigued and then obsessed with learning her secret that he stalks her personal maid, breaks into her house, and threatens her only to become a victim himself of the Queen of Spades.