



# STEPHEN HAWKING

(1942–2018)

School bored Stephen, so he was thrilled when it finished and he could move to university in Cambridge, to learn about cosmology, the study of everything to do with our universe.

Stephen had a lot of big questions. How did the universe start? And why? What came before it? And what exactly are black holes?

He had a special mind and his work quickly impressed everyone.

Then, when Stephen was twenty-one, his friends and family started to notice that he would trip over and sometimes lose control of his words. They were worried. They sent him to a doctor, who diagnosed him with a disease called ALS, which meant that Stephen's body was slowly shutting down. The doctors said that he only had two more years to live. Hearing that, Stephen threw himself straight back into his investigation of the cosmos.

Despite the doctor's fears, he lived for another fifty years, and he became one of the most important physicists in the world. Even though he was in a wheelchair, couldn't move and

needed a computer to speak, Stephen never stopped searching for a theory of everything: one single idea that could explain the entire universe and everything in it.

He also found time to write a famous book called *A Brief History of Time*, which, for a lot of people everywhere, was their first glimpse into the grand mysteries of time and space.

As his illness got worse, Stephen spent time with his children and grandchildren, continued his research, and travelled to give lectures on the cosmos.

'However difficult life may seem,' he said, 'there is always something you can do and succeed at. It matters that you don't just give up.'