

Frogwell School Year 2 Knowledge Organiser - Term 4
Who was Brunel and what was his job?



Who is Isambard Kingdom Brunel?

Isambard Kingdom Brunel was born on 9th April 1806 in Portsmouth. He lived during the reign of Queen Victoria. He married Mary Horsley in 1836 and they had three children called Isambard Junior, Henry Marc and Florence Mary. Brunel was famous for wearing a tall, black hat (to make him appear taller) – very stylish in Victorian times. Brunel died on 5th September 1859 and was buried in London.

What was his job?

Brunel's parents sent him to good schools in England and France to learn the skills he needed to be an engineer. His engineering work led to him designing tunnels, bridges and ships.

What difference did he make?

Isambard Kingdom Brunel worked on the Thames tunnel (The world's first underwater tunnel) with his father, who was also an engineer. He almost drowned when the roof collapsed and flooded in 1827. While Brunel was recovering, he entered a competition to design a bridge over the Avon river gorge in Clifton, Bristol – this later became the Clifton Suspension Bridge. Brunel was the chief engineer of the Great Western Railway (GWR) which still exists today. He designed the railway between London and Bristol. He was the man who had the idea to make the Box tunnel to speed up travel between Chippenham and Bristol. Also, he designed fast ships which used steam and propellers and changed worldwide travel by making it faster and more efficient – He invented the first Trans-Atlantic steamer!

His Legacy

Incredibly, his constructions are still used today and his engineering designs impacted on many people's lives! Many engineers today use work which is based upon his research and designs. You can visit the SS Great Britain in Bristol and also travel over the Clifton suspension bridge. When you go into Chippenham town centre you can see his viaduct bridge and the trains travelling over it. There are 6 statues of him around Bristol and London to commemorate his achievements.

Vocabulary

construction	Building something
design	A drawing or plan of what something will look like
engineer	The design, building, and use of engines, machines and structures
reign	Rule as monarch (king or queen)
Steamship	A ship powered by a steam engine
Propeller	A mechanical device with rotating blades
Suspension bridge	A bridge where the weight is supported by vertical (tall) cables
Victorian Era	The time of Queen Victoria 1819-1901

architect

A person who designs buildings and oversees their construction.

Timeline:

1806– Isambard Kingdom Brunel was born.

1831 - Work starts on Clifton Suspension Bridge but is abandoned in 1843.

1833 - Brunel appointed Chief Engineer to Great Western Railway and starts surveying the route.

1836 - Work begins on Box Tunnel. Appointed engineer of Great Western Steam Ship Company and construction begin.

1838 - SS Great Western sails from Bristol to New York in 15 days.

1838 – Construction started on SS Great Britain and launched in 1843.

1852 – Construction of Paddington Station begins.

1858 – SS Great Eastern launched.

1859 – Brunel dies

How does this link to Year 2 current historical knowledge?

