

All the different Annas

Anna is a common name for girls and women in many countries. However, it is not only people who get named Anna. Here are Anna's eight different namesakes!

In 1940s, Doctor Alfred Blalock and his assistant Vivien Thomas tried to find a way to help the “blue babies”, so called because of the colour of their skin. These children had a problem with arteries in their lungs, and did not receive enough oxygen. Afraid to operate on children, the pair tried a new type of surgery on a dog. Her name was Anna and she survived it. After their success, Doctor Blalock and Thomas performed the very first open-heart surgery on a human. Anna's story was made into a film and she became famous.



Golden Delicious apples could not grow in hot climates. Therefore, some enthusiasts in Israel managed to cultivate an apple sort known as Anna. It does not need as much cold weather as the Golden Delicious, so it can be grown in warm climates. It came to the US in 1959 and became the most popular type of apple in Florida.



In 1740, British Captain George Anson decided to sail around the world. One of the ships he took was a small merchant vessel which originally took coal from Yorkshire to London – Anna. Although it was not large, it crossed the Atlantic, but got lost while going around Cape Horn. Its Captain managed to sail it through heavy storms and found shelter in Chile. The rest of the company found them two months later, but Anna was too damaged to continue the journey.



The Australian state of South Australia has the world's largest working cattle station. At over 23 thousand km², it is the size of a small country! Its name is Anna Creek Station and it was established in 1863. People used to keep sheep there, but because dingoes attacked the animals, they had to switch to cows. Although the station is isolated, it has both TV and internet, and mail delivery twice a week.



Anna Valley was a village in the UK. It got its name from the Celtic river Anne, or “Ash tree stream”. It had a lively iron industry from early 19th century to the end of the 20th century, and an iron bridge still exists from that period. For some time, people also mined chalk in the nearby hills. Nowadays, it is a quiet place with modern housing. Even the old post-office was taken down several years ago.



Questions:

- 1 Sort the stories in historical order: from things or places named the earliest to the latest ones.
- 2 Using a dictionary, or your previous knowledge, explain in English what these words mean: namesake, oxygen, enthusiast, dingo, merchant, ash tree, currency?
- 3 The stories are from different parts of the world – mark the places mentioned. Which continent (or more of them) does the text not talk about?
- 4 What famous Annas do you know about?
- 5 Is there another name you can find that connects so many different things and places?
- 6 What is your favourite name? What does it mean? Who or what bears it?