

READING

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Nathaniel Hawthorne was a famous American novelist. He was born on July 4, 1804, in Salem, Massachusetts.

Nathaniel Hawthorne was his parents' only son. His father, who was a sea captain, died in 1808. Nathaniel was four years old at the time. The family went to live with his mother's rich brothers. With their financial help, Hawthorne studied at Bowdoin College from 1821 to 1825. There he became friends with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and future president Franklin Pierce.

When he was at college, he missed his mother and two sisters. When he finished his studies, he returned home for twelve years. He spent a lot of time writing and he published several stories, for example *An Old Woman's Tale* or *My Kinsman, Major Molineux*. In 1835, he published *Young Goodman Brown*, one of the most famous stories about witchcraft of all time. In 1837, he published some of his short stories in a collection called *Twice-Told Tales*.

In 1842, Nathaniel Hawthorne married Sophia Peabody, a painter and illustrator. They moved to Concord, Massachusetts, and rented a house from Ralph Waldo Emerson, a famous philosopher and writer. In 1844, the first of their three children was born.

In 1845, the family moved to Salem, where Hawthorne wrote his masterpiece, *The Scarlet Letter*. It is a novel set in a 17th century village in Puritan New England. The main character is Hester Prynne. She is a young woman who believes that her husband is dead and has a child with another man. The novel was very successful and made Hawthorne famous.

Hawthorne didn't like living in Salem. The family moved to Red House in Lenox, Massachusetts. There he became friends with Herman Melville, another famous American writer. During this period, Hawthorne published *The House of the Seven Gables*, *Blithedale Romance*, and *Tanglewood Tales*. In 1853, Hawthorne became an American Consul to Britain. In 1860, he finished *The Marble Faun*, his last novel.

Nathaniel Hawthorne died in his sleep on May 19, 1864, at Plymouth, New Hampshire.

1 Read the text and answer the following questions.

- 1 How many brothers did Nathaniel Hawthorne have? _____
- 2 What was his father's job? _____
- 3 Which book did Hawthorne publish in 1837? _____
- 4 What happened to Hawthorne in 1842? _____
- 5 How many children did Hawthorne have? _____
- 6 Who is Hester Prynne? _____
- 7 What was Nathaniel Hawthorne's last novel? _____

2 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- 1 Nathaniel Hawthorne's father died when Nathaniel was a child. _____
- 2 Hawthorne's uncles helped him to get education. _____
- 3 *Young Goodman Brown* is a story about witches. _____
- 4 Nathaniel Hawthorne's wife was an artist. _____
- 5 Ralph Waldo Emerson rented Nathaniel Hawthorne a house. _____
- 6 *The Scarlet Letter* takes place in a village in England. _____
- 7 Nathaniel Hawthorne was friends with Herman Melville. _____

SOURCES: <https://www.biography.com/people/nathaniel-hawthorne-9331923>,
<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Nathaniel-Hawthorne>, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Scarlet-Letter-novel-by-Hawthorne>

KEY

1 Read the text and answer the following questions.

- 1 How many brothers did Nathaniel Hawthorne have? **He didn't have any brothers**
- 2 What was his father's job? **he was a sea captain**
- 3 Which book did Hawthorne publish in 1837? ***Twice-Told Tales***
- 4 What happened to Hawthorne in 1842? **he married Sophia Peabody**
- 5 How many children did Hawthorne have? **three**
- 6 Who is Hester Prynne? **the main character of *The Scarlet Letter*, a young woman who believes that her husband is dead and has a child with another man**
- 7 What was Nathaniel Hawthorne's last novel? ***The Marble Faun***

2 Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- 1 Nathaniel Hawthorne's father died when Nathaniel was a child. **T**
- 2 Hawthorne's uncles helped him to get education. **T**
- 3 *Young Goodman Brown* is a story about witches. **T**
- 4 Nathaniel Hawthorne's wife was an artist. **T**
- 5 Ralph Waldo Emerson rented Nathaniel Hawthorne a house. **T**
- 6 *The Scarlet Letter* takes place in a village in England. **F (it takes place in a village in NEW England, in the USA)**
- 7 Nathaniel Hawthorne was friends with Herman Melville. **T**