

Rabindranath Tagore

Born May 6, 1861 in Kolkata

1901 Founds Santiniketan school to protest existing system of education

1912 Earns worldwide recognition with English version of Gitanjali

1913 Wins Nobel Prize for Literature, the first Asian awarded this honor

1919 After Amritsar Massacre, renounces British knighthood given to him in 1915

1941 Dies Aug. 7 at Santiniketan in Bengal

Asia's first Nobel laureate was a poet, author, songwriter, painter and educator. Not surprisingly, he advocated the Universal Man

Born in Kolkata on May 7, 1861, Rabindranath was the youngest of fourteen children. His father, **Debendranath Tagore**, was a Sanskrit scholar and a leading member of the Brahma Samaj. Rabindranath's early education was imparted at home. In school, while others use to learn their lessons, he would slip into more exciting world of dreams. Inspired by his older nephew, he wrote his first poem when he was hardly seven. At the age of seventeen, his first book of poems was published. In 1878, he went to England for further studies but returned back in just seventeen months as he did not find the studies interesting.

Besides poetry, Tagore wrote songs (both the words and the melodies), short stories, novels, plays (in both prose and verse), essays on a wide range of topics including literary criticism, polemical writing, travelogues, memoirs and books for children. Apart from a few books containing lectures given abroad and personal letters to friends who did not read Bengali, the bulk of his voluminous literary output is in Bengali. Gitanjali(1912), Tagore's own translation of the poetic prose from the Bengali Gitanjali(1910) won him the Nobel prize for Literature in 1913. In 1883, he got married to **Mrinalini Devi**. He taught his wife Bengali and Sanskrit. Tagore died on 7 August 1941 in the family house in Kolkata where he was born