

Newton and the Apple

Sadly, many colourful stories about famous people are untrue. The lovely story about Newton and the apple does seem to be true, though.

When he was old, Newton sat under an apple tree talking to a friend. Newton told his friend that he had been sitting under a similar tree years earlier when a falling apple had caught his attention.

Newton watched the apple fall and wondered why it fell straight down, rather than sideways or upwards. He was a great scientist, so he decided to work out why.

After years of work, Newton wrote a book called *Principia* in 1687. In the book, he explained that all objects try to pull other objects towards them, and that the larger the object is, the stronger it pulls. This is called gravity and it explains why the large object, the Earth, pulled the small object, the apple, towards it.

Since Newton told the story of the falling apple to many people, it may well be true.

1. What is unusual about the story of Newton and the apple?

2. What do you think made Newton tell his friend the story?

3. Why did the apple interest Newton?

4. What did Newton discover?
