

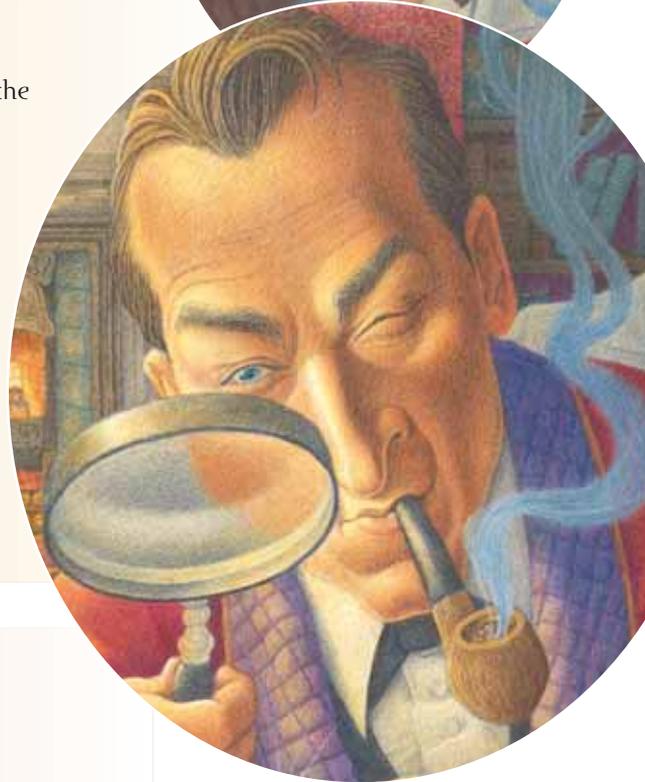
Sherlock Holmes: *The Emerald Crown*

- 1** Leggi il testo sull'autore e il riassunto della storia. Poi rispondi alle domande.

The Author

Arthur Conan Doyle was born in Edinburgh in 1859. He studied medicine and was a doctor before he became a writer in 1891. Conan Doyle created the famous fictional detective, Sherlock Holmes.

When Conan Doyle wrote a Sherlock Holmes story, he started at the end of the mystery and worked back from there. He wrote his first Sherlock Holmes story – *A Study in Scarlet* – in three weeks. It introduced the characters of Holmes and his friend, Dr Watson. They appeared in 56 short stories and four novels. Conan Doyle gave Holmes a London address – 221B Baker Street. Even today, tourists come to Baker Street to look for this house, even though Sherlock Holmes is a character in a book and was not a real person. In 1893 Conan Doyle 'killed' Holmes in the *The Final Problem*. But everyone wanted more stories about Sherlock Holmes so he wrote a new story – *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, in 1902. King Edward VII knighted Conan Doyle and he became 'Sir' Arthur Conan Doyle. He died in 1930.



The story

The Emerald Crown first appeared in Strand Magazine in May, 1892. In the story, someone breaks a crown and tries to steal some emeralds from it. The crown belongs to the British royal family.

The Queen's real jewels and crown are in the Jewel House in the Tower of London. The most famous crown in the collection is the Imperial State Crown. It is gold and it has 2,868 diamonds, 17 sapphires and 11 emeralds!

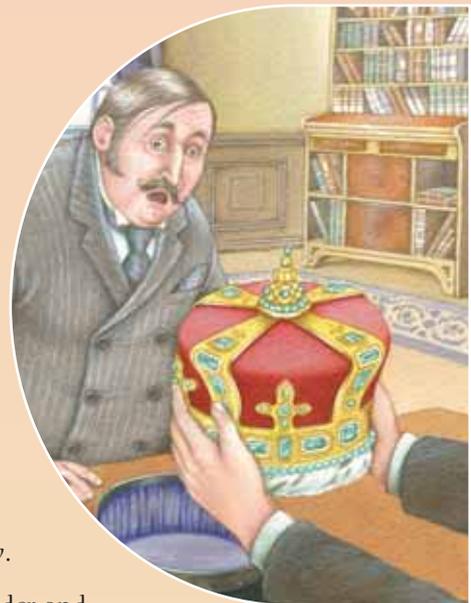
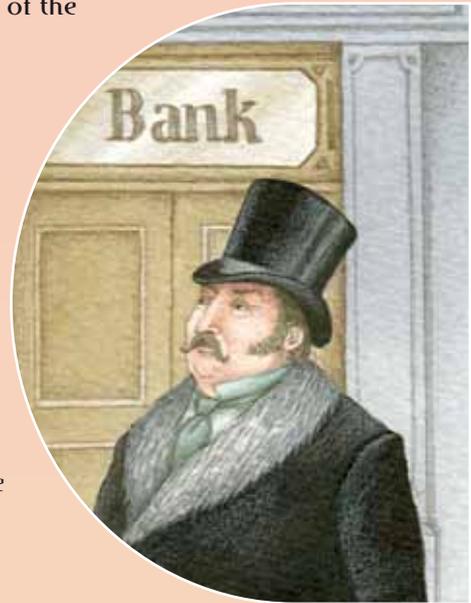


- 1 What job did Conan Doyle have?
- 2 When did he become a writer?
- 3 What was the first Sherlock Holmes mystery?
- 4 Why did Conan Doyle write another Sherlock Holmes story in 1902?
- 5 What is *The Emerald Crown* about?

The Emerald Crown

2 T4.37 Ora ascolta e leggi l'estratto da *The Emerald Crown*.

- Narrator** This is the beginning of the story. One morning, Sherlock Holmes and his friend, Dr Watson, are standing in an upstairs room in the house of the famous detective. Dr Watson is looking out of the window...
- Dr Watson** Holmes, come over here to the window. There's a very strange man in the street below. Look. He's down there in the snow.
- Holmes** I can see him. How old do you think he is?
- Dr Watson** He's about fifty ... He's tall, fat...
- Holmes** Yes, that long black coat is very expensive. He's a rich man.
- Dr Watson** He's rich, but he's worried.
- Holmes** You're right. Look how he moves his head from side to side. Look how he moves his hands up and down.
- Dr Watson** What's wrong with him? He's looking at the numbers on all the houses.
- Holmes** Watson, I think he's coming here.
- Dr Watson** Here?
- Holmes** Yes. He's very unhappy about something and I think he wants me to help him.
- Dr Watson** You're right. He's stopping at our front door.
- Holmes** There, I told you, Watson. He's here to see me...
- Maid** Mr Holder to see you, sir.
- Holmes** Please sit down. You'd like to tell us your story—is that right?
- Mr Holder** Yes, I—, I—er...
- Holmes** We can wait a minute. When you are ready, we can begin.
- Mr Holder** I look very strange, I know.
- Holmes** No, no, no, you want to tell us something important, that's all.
- Mr Holder** Why did this happen to me? It's the worst thing ... the very worst.
- Holmes** Please tell me your name, sir, and then you can tell me your story.
- Mr Holder** Perhaps you know my name. I am Alexander Holder of the Holder and Stevenson Bank of Threadneedle Street.
- Holmes** Ah yes, one of the oldest banks in London.
- Mr Holder** I'm sorry, sir. They told me about you and said, 'You must speak to Sherlock Holmes. He can help you.' I came to see you at once. I ran from Baker Street Station to get here more quickly. Thank you for waiting. I am ready to begin now.
- Dr Watson** We are listening!



- Mr Holder Yesterday morning I was in my office at the bank when a man came to see me. When I saw him, I was very surprised. He was a very famous man.
- Dr Watson Who was it?
- Mr Holder I'm sorry, but I can't tell you his name – because he's one of the British royal family. 'Mr Holder,' he said, 'people come to you to borrow money, I hear.' 'Yes, they do,' I said, 'and we always give it to them when we can.' 'I see,' said the man. 'Well, I need to borrow £50,000 from you at once.'
- Holmes That's a very large sum of money! But you said he's one of the royal family.
- Mr Holder Indeed. He said, 'I can borrow that money many times over from my friends, of course. But I wanted to come to a bank for it. It's not good to borrow from friends. After you give the money back to them, they always think they can ask you for things.'
- Dr Watson How long did he want to keep the money?
- Mr Holder For six days. He told me, 'Someone is going to give me a lot of money on Monday, so I can give back the £50,000 to you then. But I need the money now.'
- Holmes Did you ask for anything in return?
- Mr Holder Yes. I told him, 'For the bank to give you £50,000, you need to leave something expensive with us.' The man then took out a big black box and put it on the table. Do you know the Emerald Crown?
- Dr Watson It's one of the most famous crowns in England.
- Mr Holder Exactly. He took the Emerald Crown out of the box. It's gold with 39 large emeralds – all of the most beautiful colour. I was unhappy about leaving the crown at the bank. So I took it home with me. Last night I lost everything: the emeralds, my son, and my good name. You must help me to get them back.

