Lived: 1514 – 1564. Area of Expertise: Anatomy and physiology

What discoveries did he make?

- Before Vesalius doctors believed that the books written by Galen were completely accurate. They believed that they knew everything about the human body and so did not dissect.
- Vesalius challenged this idea by insisting that doctors perform dissection on human bodies – not animals as Galen had done.
- In 1543 he published his book *The Fabric of the Human body with detailed illustrations*.
- He proved that Galen was wrong by showing that the human jaw bone was one single bone. Galen had supposed that it was made of two pieces after he saw the same thing in animals.
- This proved for many people that Galen could be wrong in other areas too.

How did he make his discovery?

- He dissected dead human bodies.
- He challenged the authority of Galen.
- He used artists to help him show his results.
- He taught what he had found to students at the university of Padua.

How did the Renaissance help Vesalius make his discoveries?

Vesalius studied medicine in Paris and Italy where he met artists who were studying skeletons and dissecting bodies to help them get their paintings more realistic.

Vesalius began to also make detailed drawings of his dissections.

Vesalius was also free to experiment and to challenge current authority due to the atmosphere of the Renaissance.

Did Vesalius help improve health and treatments?

**Basically no.** Despite the fact that his medical discoveries were very important in the long term Vesalius did very little to change things for patients. You were still treated the same as you were 100 years before!