Robert Hooke

(18 July 1635 – 3 March 1703)

Robert Hooke was born in Freshwater, Isle of Wight. He was one of the most brilliant and versatile seventeenth century English scientists. He attended Oxford University but never graduated. Yet he was an extremely talented inventor, instrument-maker and building designer. He was also interested in painting and making mechanical toys and models. Hooke suffered from diabetes and died at the age of 67 in London.

Hooke assisted Robert Boyle in the construction of Boylean air pump used in Boyle's gas law experiments. In 1662, he was appointed as Curator of Experiments to the newly founded Royal Society. Hooke's role at the Royal Society was to demonstrate experiments from his own methods. His earliest demonstrations were discussions of the nature of air and the implosion of glass bubbles which had been sealed with comprehensive hot air. In 1665, he became Professor of Geometry in Gresham College where he carried out his astronomical observations. He built a Gregorian reflecting telescope; discovered the fifth star in the trapezium. He suggested wave theory of light and first used the word 'cell' in a biological context. During his career, Hooke also studied comets, the motion of light, the rotation of Jupiter and gravity.

Robert Hooke is best known to physicists for his discovery of law of elasticity. This law laid the basis for studies of stress and strain and for understanding the elastic materials.

Teachers may suggest students to make a collage of photographs scientists in physics depicting the advancements in the subject.