

# Thomas Newcomen Encyclopedia Article

## Thomas Newcomen

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

# Contents

<a href="#">Thomas Newcomen Encyclopedia Article.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Thomas Newcomen.....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>

# Thomas Newcomen

**1663-1729**

English engineer who invented the first atmospheric steam engine. Newcomen was born in Dartmouth, and spent many years as an iron-monger there. Finding out that pumping water out of mines was at the time accomplished through a labor-intensive process, using horses, he spent 10 years trying to create an engine that would complete the task mechanically. Newcomen's engine was comprised of a piston within a vertical cylinder and a huge beam which connected to the mine pumps. The engine was groundbreaking in that it used atmospheric pressure, so as not to be limited by the pressure of steam. The first Newcomen engine was used in a South Staffordshire Colliery in 1712, and within a few years the invention was put into use in mines throughout the country. In 1765, however, Newcomen's engine was overshadowed by that of Scottish mechanical engineer James Watt (1736-1819), who is now considered the true inventor of the steam engine.