For over 200 years, Madame Tussaud's exhibition of wax figures **has been**(**present perfect active)** one of Britain's most popular attractions. The exhibition **has** constantly **developed** (**present perfect active)** and now visitors **can (modal verb active** )**see(present indefinite active )** the world's public figures, including men and women who **have made** (**present perfect active)** a lasting impact on our lives, Kings and Queens, great statesmen, religious leaders, superstars past and present who **have become** (**present perfect active)** legends.

But the story of Madame Tussaud **is(present tense of “to be” active )** as impressive as her exhibition. Two things about her **are** **(present tense of “to be” active )** especially interesting. First, she **spent**(**past indefinite active )** her early years in the turmoil of the French Revolution and **came**(**past indefinite active )**  to meet many of its characters, and perhaps more unusually, she **succeeded**(**past indefinite active )**  in business at a time when women **were** seldom **involved (past indefinite passive )**in the world of commerce.

Madame Tussaud whose first name **is** **(present tense of “to be” active** Marie **was born** **(past indefinite passive** in France in 1761. Her father, a soldier, **was killed** **(past indefinite passive** in battle two months before her birth. She **lived** (**past indefinite active** with the mother who **worked**(**past indefinite active** as a housekeeper for the doctor who **had**(**past indefinite active** a wonderful skill of modelling anatomical subjects in wax. Soon Marie and her mother with the doctor Curtius **moved** (**past indefinite active** to Paris.

France **was approaching** (**past continuous active**)the Revolution. Dr. Curtius’s house **became**(**past indefinite active** a meeting place of philosophers, writers and revolutionaries. Marie soon **discovered**(**past indefinite active** she **had**(**past indefinite active** a talent for observation and remembering the details of faces.

Dr. Curtius **acted** (**past indefinite active** as a teacher to Marie, schooling her in the techniques of wax portraits. Thanks to him she **used** (**past indefinite active** a scientific approach in wax portraiture. She **was** soon **allowed (past indefinite passive)t**o model the great figures of the time. Among them **were** **(past tense of “to be ” active** )Francois Voltaire and the American statesman Benjamin Franklin. Dr. Curtius’s exhibition **was patronized** **(past indefinite passive)**by the French Royal family and Marie **was invited** **(past indefinite passive)**to the Royal Court.

At the time of the revolution Marie and her mother **were imprisoned** **(past indefinite passive)**for some time. Later Marie **was asked** **(past indefinite passive)**to prepare the death masks of French aristocrats who **had been executed**(**past perfect passive** ) – among them the King and the Queen.

The time of terror **came**(**past indefinite active**) to an end. In 1794 the doctor **died past indefinite active** and Marie **inherited** (**past indefinite active)** the business which **had grown**(**past perfect active )** under her influence.

In the following years she **married past indefinite active** a French engineer, Francois Tussaud and by 1800 **had given** **(past perfect active**)birth to three children: a daughter who **died** **past indefinite active** and two sons. It **was(past tense of “to be” active )** difficult for the exhibition to survive in France and in 1802 Marie Tussaud **made** **past indefinite active** a monumental decision. She **would leave** **(future past simple active )**her husband and baby son in Paris while she and her elder son **would tour** t**(future past simple active** he exhibition round the British Isles.

Marie **was** (**past tense of “to be” active)**to see neither France nor her husband again. She **spent(past indefinite active)**the next 33 years travelling in Great Britain. Later her other son **joined (past indefinite active)**her. Both of her sons **were interested**(**past indefinite passive** ) in the business. The travels **ended(past indefinite active)** in 1835 when Madame Tussaud’s exhibition **found(past indefinite active)** a permanent home in London. Since that there **have been(present perfect active )** fires and disasters but many new figures **have been added(present perfect passive )** to the collection. This unusual woman **died(past indefinite active)** in 1884 at the age of 89.

You **can** (**modal verb active )**see her remarkable self-portrait in Museum as well.