

Talking about ideas & inventions

A Key nouns

breakthrough	a discovery or a solution to a problem
commercial success	something that sells a lot and makes a lot of money
drawback	a disadvantage
early adopters	people who buy/use new high-tech products when they first appear on the market
flash of inspiration	a sudden very good idea
gadget	a small mechanical or technological device or tool
gimmick	something that is intended to draw attention but is not really useful

a Look at the words in bold and their definitions in A in the KEY VOCABULARY PANEL. Listen again and complete the sentences.

- 1 The speaker claims the fast finger keyboard is quite a **breakthrough** because...
- 2 The main **drawback** of early alphabetical keyboards was...
- 3 The inventor got her **flash of inspiration** when...
- 4 It has not been a **commercial success** because...
- 5 **Early adopters** say...
- 6 The speaker asks if we think this **gadget** is just another **gimmick** or...

b  Work in pairs. Answer the questions.

- Do you think the keyboard is just another gimmick? Why/Why not?
- What was the last piece of new technology you bought? Why did you buy it?
- Are you usually an early adopter? Why/Why not?
- Can you think of any new technological breakthroughs in the news recently? Are they genuine breakthroughs or just gimmicks?

B Word building: -al/un-

- Add -al to the nouns in the box to form adjectives.

convention inspiration logic
nature origin tradition

traditional

- Which of the adjectives can you use to describe the fast finger keyboard?
- Look at the adjectives again. Which can you not add the prefix un- to? Which negative prefix can you add?

C Getting ideas

- Underline expressions for “getting ideas” in Transcript 11.1 on page 43. Complete 1–4 with the words in the box.

got out struck up

- 1 It them that...
- 2 They figured a way to...
- 3 Someone came with the idea of...
- 4 The inventor the idea from...

-  Think of a problem you had to solve recently. How did you find the solution? Use the expressions to explain the situation to a partner.