

8B Inventions

Reading and listening

1 8.3 Read and listen to the text.
Which three inventions happened accidentally?



Accidental inventions

Scientists and inventors work hard to design new things, but some great inventions happen accidentally. Three of these inventions have one thing in common – the scientists didn't try to invent them!

- 1 Percy Lebaron Spencer was an American engineer. In 1945, he invented the microwave oven – but he didn't try to invent it! He worked with radio signals. One day at work, a bar of chocolate in his pocket melted. Spencer experimented with different food items. The radio signals cooked them perfectly.
- 2 In 1968, a scientist called Spencer Silver made some new glue. It didn't stick things very well. His company didn't develop it. Seven years later, his friend thought of a use for this glue: sticky notes.
- 3 Sir Timothy Berners-Lee is an English computer scientist. In 1989, he developed a new communication system for computers. In 1990, he and Robert Cailliau created the World Wide Web. At the time, they didn't imagine the impact of the invention. The Web grew quickly. After a few years, it connected millions of people around the world.
- 4 One day in 1941, George de Mestral took his dog for a walk. Some plant seeds stuck to both of them. De Mestral didn't know why this happened. He looked at his clothes and the seeds with a microscope. Then he copied the design carefully and invented Velcro.

2 Read the text again and answer the questions.

- 1 When did Percy Lebaron Spencer invent the microwave?
- 2 What did Spencer Silver make in 1968?
- 3 Who did Sir Timothy Berners-Lee work with?
- 4 What is the name of George de Mestral's invention?

Listening

3 8.4 Match the dates with the inventions and complete the sentences. Then listen to the information from a science museum and check.

1876 1901 1957 1971 1979 1991

- 1 Alexander Graham Bell made the first telephone call in
- 2 A Japanese company sold the first mobile phones in
- 3 Ray Tomlinson sent the first email message in
- 4 The first webcam took pictures at Cambridge University in
- 5 Marconi sent a radio signal across the Atlantic Ocean in
- 6 Russia launched the first communications satellite in

Vocabulary

4 How many adverbs can you find in the text? Which adverbs are irregular?

- ... inventors work hard ...
- ... some inventions happen accidentally.

Adverbs describe verbs. They usually – but not always – end in 'ly'.

See Vocabulary Explorer: Page 112

See Grammar Explorer: Page 127

5 Choose the correct adverb.

e.g. They telephoned the doctor. She came **perfectly** / **quickly** / **slowly**.

- 1 They had a problem. They thought **happily** / **perfectly** / **hard**.
- 2 The speakers were new. They worked **badly** / **clearly** / **perfectly**.
- 3 The printer was old. It worked **accidentally** / **quietly** / **slowly**.
- 4 She didn't hear the telephone because it rang **loudly** / **quietly** / **well**.
- 5 The keyboard was old. I used it **carefully** / **carelessly** / **perfectly**.