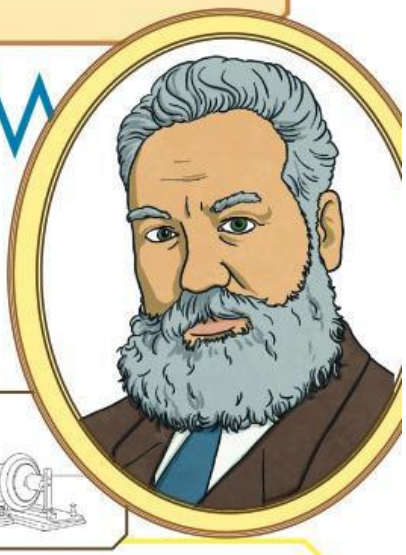
What Is History's Greatest Invention?

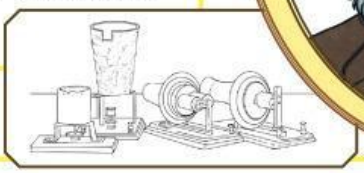
Throughout history, the development of new technology has continuously improved our way of life. The amazing creations that inventors have provided for us have made communication easier, information more accessible and medical care more effective.

Telephone





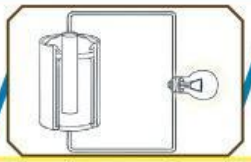
Alexander Graham Bell is credited with inventing the telephone in March 1876. He made the first phone call in history to his assistant, Thomas Watson. According to accounts from the time, the words he said were, 'Mr Watson, come here - I want to see you.'

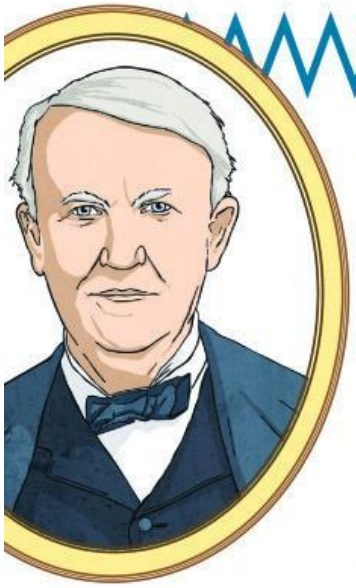




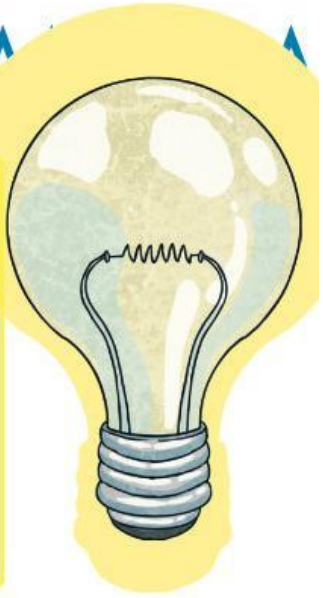
The use of the telephone quickly spread. It **revolutionised** communication and allowed business to take place between companies across the world from each other. When Alexander died in 1922, all telephone services using his invention across the United States and Canada stopped for one minute as a mark of respect.

Light Bulb





The invention of electric lighting took place in several stages. Humphry Davy experimented with electricity and realised that pieces of carbon glowed and produced light when an electric **current** passed through them. However, it was Thomas Edison who finally developed the model using metal **filaments** in 1879. His innovation opened up endless opportunities for society to progress without relying on daylight. Electric lights went on to be used in the home, street lamps, car headlights and torches.



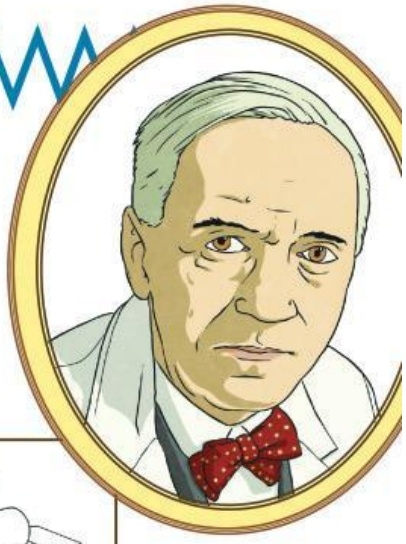
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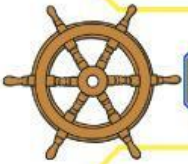
Penicillin



In 1928, Scottish chemist Alexander Fleming observed that where a particular mould was growing in a Petri dish, previously living bacteria were now dead. He studied the mould and reproduced its properties, creating the world's first antibiotic. It was called penicillin. Antibiotics have gone on to fight nearly every known infection, including **tuberculosis, malaria** and **meningitis.**







What's Your Verdict?

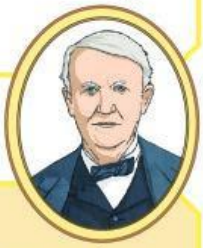
Now that you have read all about these fascinating creations, the decision is yours. Which of these inventions is the greatest? Is being able to make a phone call more important than effective medicines? Whatever you decide, all these inventions are the work of incredible scientists. The world would undoubtedly be a very different place without them.











A note about the inventors...

All the inventors in this text invented something wonderful but did you notice any other similarities between them? None of them are women and all of them are White. This is because, at the time of these historic inventions, the world of science and technology was not always one that was open and accepting to everyone. Women and People of Colour were often not given the same opportunities, equal access to education or recognition for their work that White men were. Today, everybody has the right to become an incredible inventor, no matter who they are.



Glossary

current: The flow of electricity through a circuit..
filament: A piece of wire that glows inside a lightbulb.
malaria: A disease which causes high fevers.
meningitis: An illness which causes inflammation in the brain.
revolutionised: To make important changes to something.
tuberculosis: A disease which affects the lungs.

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Questions

1. Who received the first phone call in history? Tick one.

   - ○ Alexander Graham Bell
   - ○ Thomas Watson
   - ○ Humphry Davy
   - ○ Thomas Edison

2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they happened in.

   - ☐ Thomas Edison invented the light bulb.
   - ☐ Telephone services stopped for one minute in the US and Canada.
   - ☐ The telephone was invented.
   - ☐ Penicillin was discovered.

3. What is Penicillin? Tick one.

   - ○ a virus
   - ○ an antiseptic
   - ○ a bacteria
   - ○ an antibiotic

4. Draw **four** lines and match each item to its owner.

the telephone	Thomas Edison
light created using electricity	Alexander Fleming
the light bulb	Alexander Graham Bell
penicillin	Humphry Davy

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5. Look at the first paragraph.
   Find and copy one word which means the same as 'easy to find'.

   _____

6. What is penicillin made of?

   _____

7. Which of these inventions do you think is most important? Why?

   _____

   _____

   _____

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Questions

1. When did Alexander Graham Bell's wife lose her hearing? Tick one.

   - ○ 1876
   - ○ age 16
   - ○ age 5
   - ○ 1922

2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they happened in.

   - ☐ Telephone services stopped for one minute.
   - ☐ Edison's light bulb was invented.
   - ☐ The first telephone call took place.
   - ☐ Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin.

3. Look at the paragraph which begins **Alexander took much inspiration...**
   Find and copy one word which means 'to make important changes to something'.

   _____

4. Fill in the missing words.
   Many of the _____ used today are derived from penicillin and save millions of lives by stopping the spread of harmful _____.

5. What was penicillin made from?

   _____

6. **Like many other inventions, the invention of electric lighting took place in several stages.**
   What does this tell you about the process of creating a new invention?

   _____

   _____

   _____

7. Anyone can be an inventor! What would you like to invent?
   Describe your invention and why you think it is needed.

   _____

   _____

   _____

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8. Which of the three inventions in this text do you think made the greatest impact on the world? Explain your answer fully using evidence from the text.

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