

The history of taxes



Taxes have been around since human civilization first ¹ _____. The oldest tax that we know about was used in Mesopotamia as ² _____ as 4,500 years ago. The longest existing tax, a Chinese agricultural tax, was in use for over 2,600 years ³ _____ it was eliminated in 2006.

Throughout history, many unusual taxes have been used by governments to ⁴ _____ money. One of the strangest was the tax on beards introduced by the Russian Emperor, Peter the Great, who wanted his countrymen to ⁵ _____ more like clean-shaven Western Europeans. However, the more traditional citizens considered beards a ⁶ _____ of religious belief, and the tax had been a source of conflict until the government decided to end it in the 20th century. In the 18th century, ⁷ _____ was a tax in England that made house owners pay for each window in their house. People were ⁸ _____ to pay more tax if they had more windows. Because people wanted to avoid the tax, they started building houses with very few windows, which ⁹ _____ led to health problems.