

1 READING • A timeline of communication

1 Read and listen to the timeline.

Choose the correct answer.

The main purpose of the timeline is ...

- a to tell us the best ways to communicate
- b to explain the history of communication
- c to give recent news about technology

Communication through time

380–6 BC

15th century

19th–20th century

21st century

- A Why is language so important? Well, it's part of what makes us human! We are the only species on Earth that can share our thoughts and ideas through language. And our history shows how we are always looking for new ways to communicate ...
- B Early human language was a spoken form of communication. Around 40,000 years ago, there were cave paintings and then much later, around 5,500 years ago, people started creating picture-writing systems, such as Egyptian hieroglyphs. The alphabets we use today developed after this, over thousands of years.
- C Until the 15th century, people copied books by hand. Obviously, this was a very slow process. With the invention of the printing press, all of this changed. In 1440, it became possible to copy books easily and quickly, and many more people learned to read.
- D Sending personal messages was still slow for a few hundred years. It used to take weeks for letters to arrive. In the 1830s, electric telegraph services started for short messages. By the early 20th century, the telephone made it possible to communicate spoken words over long distances. Email, the internet and mobile phones became popular in the 1990s.
- E Today, we communicate with people all over the world using gadgets. We use text messages, video calls and chat and picture apps like WhatsApp and Instagram. In an age of easy, instant messaging, it's hard to imagine how difficult communication used to be.

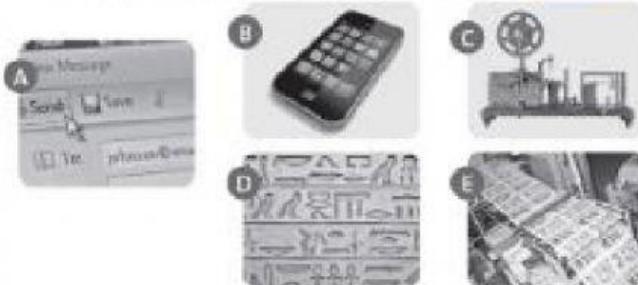
2 Read the timeline again. Choose the correct words to describe each paragraph.

- A why human communication is special / difficult / scientific
- B the slowest / earliest / best forms of communication
- C the beginning / end / cost of printing
- D inventions over the last ten / 100 / 200 years
- E electronics / life / communication today

12 Fads and fashions

3 Match sentences 1–5 with photos A–E.

- 1 It was very different from modern writing.
- 2 It made it quicker and easier to copy texts.
- 3 It was the first technology for instant messaging.
- 4 It became common with the internet.
- 5 It lets you speak to people from a distance.



4 Answer the questions. Write complete sentences.

Why does the writer say language is important?
Because only humans can share thoughts and ideas through language.

1 How were early writing systems different?

2 Why didn't there use to be many books?

3 What effect did the printing press have on people?

4 How did the telephone change communication?

5 Why do people today find it difficult to imagine communication in the past?

5 VOCABULARY PLUS Complete the sentences with the words.

amazingly apparently generally obviously

- 1 It isn't true for everyone, but teenagers use technology a lot.
- 2 This new computer is very fast and it looks great. , it only costs £179!
- 3 In the past, we didn't have telephones, so , communication was slower.
- 4 I don't know what computers used to look like, but they were big and heavy.

4 Write sentences using the past continuous.

- 1 What / Tim / do / at four o'clock?
- 2 He / watch / a film on TV
- 3 We / not wear / coats
- 4 you / talk / to Tom on Skype?
- 5 I / sleep / when you called
- 6 They / not listen / to music



- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____