

A century of change

Since (0) the beginning of the last century there have been enormous changes in the way (1) ____ people live. (2) ____ world has become a much smaller place and (3) ____ life is much faster.

In (4) ____ first half of the twentieth century, (5) ____ horse was gradually replaced by (6) ____ motor car as (7) ____ most popular form of transport. (8) ____ hundred years ago, (9) ____ air travel was in its infancy; now there are over 90 000 commercial flights (10) ____ day worldwide. In the 1940s, (11) ____ steam trains were still a common sight on the world's railways. They have now all but disappeared from mainline routes and in several countries electric-powered high-speed trains can be seen racing across (12) ____ countryside at around 300 kilometres (13) ____ hour.

And (14) ____ information travels faster, too, thanks to developments in information technology, telecommunications and mass media. Having your own computer at (15) ____ home was almost unheard of in 1970, but just 40 years later in 2010 there were well over (16) ____ billion personal computers in use worldwide. Invented in 1876, (17) ____ telephone was already fairly widely in use by 1910, with some seven million installed in (18) ____ United States alone. But who could have predicted that a century later an estimated 70 per cent of the world's population would own (19) ____ mobile phone? Commercial television did not really take off until just after (20) ____ Second World War – and we all know how successful that phenomenon has been!

Another area where enormous changes have taken place is