

THE HISTORY OF COMPUTERS

The word computer comes from the term 'to compute' which means to calculate. The Abacus, first used around 2700 B.C., was the world's first device used to perform various calculations (adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing). The abacus is wooden and rectangular, and is still being used in some parts of the world.



All computers can be grouped into five generations. They are grouped according to their key component.

1ST GENERATION [~1946 - 1956]



Many thousands of years and devices after the abacus is when the first generation of computers came about. The **ENIAC** – The Electrical Numerical Integrator and Calculator was created in 1946 by John Mauchly and J. Presper Eckert. It covered 1,800 square feet of space, weighed about 30 tons. This computer is considered the grandfather

of digital computers. In 1951, The **UNIVAC**, also invented by Mr. Mauchly and Eckert, was the first American computer designed specifically for business and administrative use. As you can see from the picture of the vacuum tube to the right, → it looks much like a light bulb. Vacuum tubes were the main component of these computers; they were huge, fragile, unreliable, slow, used a lot of electricity, and produced a lot of heat. Input was based on punched cards and paper tape, and output was displayed on printouts.



Vacuum tubes: slow, expensive, fragile



1) Name of generation _____

2) What was the main component? _____

3) Draw your version of it.



4) Were there any shortcomings? If yes, what were they? _____
