

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