

READING PRACTICE:

Read the passage.

- A** Predicting what life will be like in the future is not easy, and most predictions are incorrect. Even science fiction writers, who make a career out of writing about the future, are usually wrong in what they predict. But occasionally, science fiction writers have made predictions about future developments that are surprisingly accurate.
- B** Many sci-fi stories deal with future conflicts - for example, wars fought between humans on Earth, and conflicts between humans and alien species. It is perhaps not surprising that at least some predictions about war technology have come true. In a story written in 1903, for instance, early sci-fi writer H.G. Wells predicted metal war machines. His prediction came true just 13 years later when the first tanks were built. Wells also predicted that humans would one day develop weapons based on nuclear power. Again, his prediction came true.
- C** Other science fiction predictions have focused on entertainment technologies. Have you used a tablet computer to access online information recently? Listened to music through earbud-type headphones? Or, watched something on a flat-screen television? For many citizens today, these are common activities. Yet these were all predicted several decades or longer ago by science fiction writers.
- D** Science fiction writers have predicted several advances in communications technology, too. These include computers that can translate immediately between different languages, and the use of artificial satellites to broadcast television or telephone signals around the world. Sci-fi authors also predicted developments in security technology, such as the use of such satellites to track the position of objects, or even people, from space, and the use of cameras to spy on the actions of citizens.
- E** Some kinds of science fiction technology have not come true yet - but are very close. Take the machines called replicators that appear in the *Star Trek* movies and television programs. These machines are able to produce a wide variety of objects - from food to liquids to clothes. Although replicators do not yet exist, 3-D printers are a similar device. Self-driving cars are also common in science fiction stories. These already exist on our streets, at least in some regions, and some experts predict they will become normal within a decade.

Look at each statement and write:

TRUE if the statement agrees with information in the passage
FALSE if the statement contradicts information in the passage
NOT GIVEN if there is no information about this in the passage

15. Science fiction writers usually make accurate predictions about the future.

16. Stories about human-alien conflicts are the most popular of all science fiction stories.

17. The writer H. G. Wells made at least two predictions about military technology that were accurate.

18. Flat-screen televisions were invented in the early twenty-first century.

19. At least one sci-fi author predicted that computers would be able to provide immediate translations.

20. Science fiction writers accurately predicted how satellites could be used to track people and objects.

21. In *Star Trek* movies and TV shows, replicator machines are only used to produce types of food and drink.

22. According to the predictions of experts, self-driving cars will soon become more common.
