

The history of taxes



Taxes have been around since human civilization first ¹ _____. The oldest tax that we know about was used in Mesopotamia as ² _____ as 4,500 years ago. The longest existing tax, a Chinese agricultural tax, was in use for over 2,600 years ³ _____ it was eliminated in 2006.

Throughout history, many unusual taxes have been used by governments to ⁴ _____ money. One of the strangest was the tax on beards introduced by the Russian Emperor, Peter the Great, who wanted his countrymen to ⁵ _____ more like clean-shaven Western Europeans. However, the more traditional citizens considered beards a ⁶ _____ of religious belief, and the tax had been a source of conflict until the government decided to end it in the 20th century. In the 18th century, ⁷ _____ was a tax in England that made house owners pay for each window in their house. People were ⁸ _____ to pay more tax if they had more windows. Because people wanted to avoid the tax, they started building houses with very few windows, which ⁹ _____ led to health problems.

Although most modern taxes are not so strange, many people still ¹⁰ _____ paying them. But people will always try to avoid unpleasant things, won't they?

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|-------------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| 1 A went | B gave | C began | D was |
| 2 A early | B late | C soon | D well |
| 3 A because | B until | C while | D after |
| 4 A pay | B have | C spend | D raise |
| 5 A see | B look | C watch | D seem |
| 6 A sound | B right | C sign | D way |
| 7 A where | B there | C that | D which |
| 8 A had | B got | C said | D made |
| 9 A before | B after | C eventually | D while |
| 10 A accept | B dislike | C encourage | D consider |