

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?

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