

LISTENING 1

UNDERSTANDING KEY VOCABULARY

PREPARING TO LISTEN

1 Match the words in bold to the definitions (a–h).

- 1 Al-Jazari **designed** machines to help with farming. He made drawings and gave detailed descriptions on how to build these machines.
- 2 Paper is a very **common** invention. People use it in their everyday lives.
- 3 This museum **contains** a lot of interesting exhibitions.
- 4 The Chinese **developed** gunpowder and used it for weapons.
- 5 Sat-Nav is a small **device** in your car which tells you where to go.
- 6 I have bought a new phone but I need to read the **instructions** on how to connect it to the internet.
- 7 The teacher drew a **diagram** showing how the machine worked.
- 8 There is no **ink** left inside this pen. It doesn't write anymore.

a a drawing, showing how something works
b found everywhere and known to many people
c to make plans for something
d a coloured liquid used for writing or drawing
e a piece of equipment, which is used for a specific purpose
f information on how to do something
g to have something inside
h to invent something

USING YOUR KNOWLEDGE

2 Match the photographs (A–D) with the inventions (1–4). What do you think each invention is used for?

- 1 the fountain pen
- 2 chess
- 3 gunpowder
- 4 the crank shaft

WHILE LISTENING

3  Listen to a talk about the inventions in Exercise 2. In what order are they mentioned?

LISTENING FOR MAIN IDEAS





4 Listen again and answer the questions below.

- 1 When were the things in the photographs invented?
 - a in the last century
 - b in ancient times
 - c in medieval times
- 2 Why was the fountain pen an improvement on bird's feathers and ink?
 - a it was cleaner
 - b you could put it in your clothes
 - c you could hold it with your fingers
- 3 Where was the game of chess first played?
 - a in Spain
 - b in Persia
 - c in India
- 4 Who was al-Jazari?
 - a a Persian ruler
 - b a Turkish engineer
 - c a Chinese inventor
- 5 What is a crank shaft?
 - a a device currently used in car engines
 - b a device used for playing chess
 - c a device used for washing clothes
- 6 Why was gunpowder an important invention?
 - a people could see fireworks
 - b it stopped wars
 - c new weapons were invented

LISTENING FOR
DETAIL

PRONUNCIATION FOR LISTENING

EXPLANATION

Weak forms and strong forms

In spoken English, small words (like articles, auxiliary verbs and prepositions) are not usually stressed. Weak forms are unstressed versions of these words.

The unstressed vowel in these words is pronounced /ə/ (to = /tə/, the = /ðə/, etc.). The consonant that comes after the unstressed vowel is not always spoken, so the words *of* and *or* can be pronounced as /ə/.

However, sometimes we may want to emphasize these small words, to make them the main part of our message. Then, we stress these words and pronounce them with a strong form.

5 7.2 Listen and complete the sentences below. Use one or two words in each gap.

- 1 Inventions _____ technology from India, Persia, China, North Africa _____ Middle East were brought _____ Europe.
- 2 _____ game _____ chess was first played in ancient India, _____ modern version _____ game was developed in Persia _____ brought _____ Spain in _____ 10th century.
- 3 _____ crankshaft is _____ long arm that allows machines _____ move _____ straight line.
- 4 As we move along, you will find one _____ most important inventions _____ medieval times.

6 7.3 Listen to the extracts (1–3). Then match them to the reasons (a–c).

- 1 The Middle Ages **were** an interesting time and they were full of scientific discoveries.
- 2 Many inventions and machines designed by medieval scholars are still in use today. **And**, some of these inventions are very common.
- 3 Many people think gunpowder is **the** most important invention in history.

Strong forms are used ...

- a to emphasize that there is nothing better or more than this.
- b to contrast with an earlier idea that the Middle Ages were **not** an interesting time.
- c to emphasize that there is more information.

POST-LISTENING

EXPLANATION

Referring to earlier ideas

We can refer to things we talked about earlier. In the sentence below, the word *it* refers back to the invention of the telephone.

In 1876, Bell invented the telephone. *It* changed the way we communicate.

Using the word *it* helps us to avoid repeating the same information again.

7 Look at sentences 1–5 below. What do the highlighted words refer back to?

- 1 The first fountain pen was made in 953 for the caliph of the Maghreb. Before **then**, people used bird feathers and ink to write with.
- 2 As some of you may know, the Middle Ages have often been called the **Dark Ages**. However, **they** were not 'dark' at all.
- 3 In this exhibition, you can see models of some of the devices that were designed by al-Jazari. Here, you can see **his** mechanical clocks.
- 4 The invention of gunpowder has changed the way we fight wars. **It** changed the outcome of many medieval battles and affected the history of the world.
- 5 Room 14 is dedicated to the invention of gunpowder. **There**, you can see early Chinese drawings which illustrate how gunpowder was used.

DISCUSSION

8 Decide which of the Chinese inventions below are most important. Make notes on the questions below.

- 1 How have these inventions changed the history of the world?
- 2 Are they still used? How?
- 3 Have these inventions led to other discoveries?

9 Work in groups. Take turns to explain why the inventions you chose are the most important.

