

## Talking about ideas & inventions

### A Key nouns

|                             |                                                                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>breakthrough</b>         | a discovery or a solution to a problem                                         |
| <b>commercial success</b>   | something that sells a lot and makes a lot of money                            |
| <b>drawback</b>             | a disadvantage                                                                 |
| <b>early adopters</b>       | people who buy/use new high-tech products when they first appear on the market |
| <b>flash of inspiration</b> | a sudden very good idea                                                        |
| <b>gadget</b>               | a small mechanical or technological device or tool                             |
| <b>gimmick</b>              | something that is intended to draw attention but is not really useful          |

**a** Look at the words in bold and their definitions in **A** in the **KEY VOCABULARY PANEL**. Listen again and complete the sentences.

- 1 The speaker claims the fast finger keyboard is quite a **breakthrough** because...
- 2 The main **drawback** of early alphabetical keyboards was...
- 3 The inventor got her **flash of inspiration** when...
- 4 It has not been a **commercial success** because...
- 5 **Early adopters** say...
- 6 The speaker asks if we think this **gadget** is just another **gimmick** or...

**b**  Work in pairs. Answer the questions.

- Do you think the keyboard is just another gimmick? Why/Why not?
- What was the last piece of new technology you bought? Why did you buy it?
- Are you usually an early adopter? Why/Why not?
- Can you think of any new technological breakthroughs in the news recently? Are they genuine breakthroughs or just gimmicks?

### B Word building: -al/un-

- Add **-al** to the nouns in the box to form adjectives.

convention   inspiration   logic  
nature   origin   tradition

*traditional*

- Which of the adjectives can you use to describe the fast finger keyboard?
- Look at the adjectives again. Which can you not add the prefix **un-** to? Which negative prefix can you add?

### C Getting ideas

- Underline expressions for “getting ideas” in Transcript 11.1 on page 43. Complete 1–4 with the words in the box.

got   out   struck   up

- 1 It ..... them that...
- 2 They figured ..... a way to...
- 3 Someone came ..... with the idea of...
- 4 The inventor ..... the idea from...

-  Think of a problem you had to solve recently. How did you find the solution? Use the expressions to explain the situation to a partner.