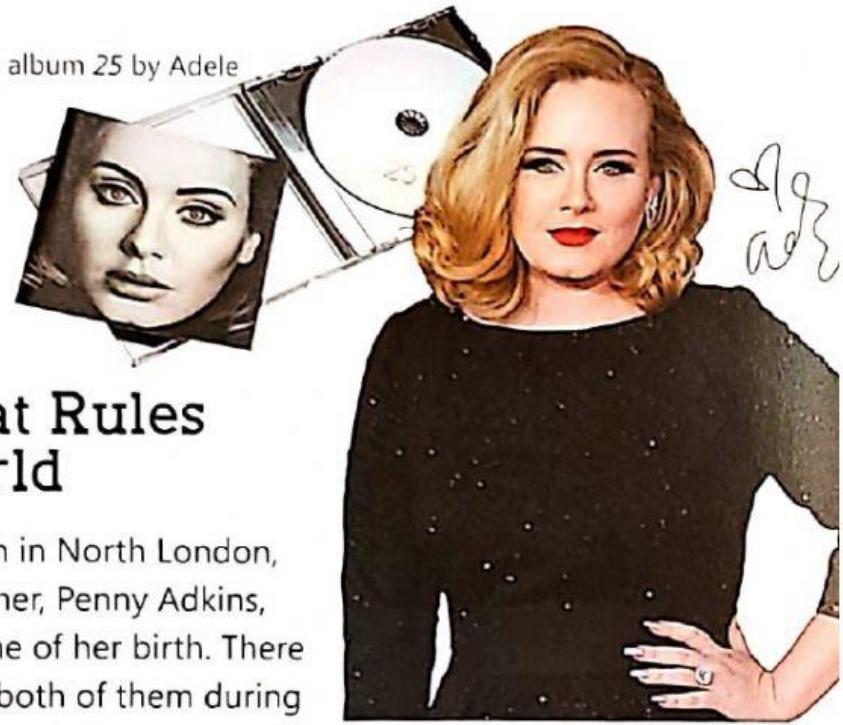




The Voice That Rules the Music World

- Adele Adkins was born in North London, England, in 1988. Her mother, Penny Adkins, was 18 years old at the time of her birth. There were some hard times for both of them during the early years. Adele's father left when Adele was just four years old. He would **keep in contact with**¹ her over the years, but it was often a troubled relationship. Adele eventually broke all contact with him when she was a teenager.
- School was a problem for Adele early on. She often felt bored and **uninspired**² in class. **Fortunately**³, things turned around when she was accepted into the BRIT School for Performing Arts & Technology. This was the same school that Amy Winehouse attended. The school allowed Adele to develop her love of music and skills in playing **multiple**⁴ instruments, including the flute, saxophone, and guitar.
- Adele's big break came when she was still at the BRIT School. She posted a short **demo**⁵ album on her MySpace page. Some **studio executives**⁶ listened to it, and then decided to sign her to a contract.
- Adele's rise to **fame**⁸ since then has been **incredible**⁹. She has recorded three albums: 19, 21, and 25. All of them are named after her age at the time of **production**¹⁰. These albums contain **memorable**¹¹ songs like "Rolling in the Deep" and "Someone Like You." They have sold over 40 million copies worldwide. Adele has also received countless **awards**¹². She swept the top **categories**¹³ of the Grammy Awards in 2012 and 2017—a first in Grammy history.
- Perhaps more important than Adele's commercial success is the way she did it. Adele is unlike other pop stars, who tend to be managed and





▲ Adele attended the 59th Grammy's Award in 2017.



▼ Adele's *Skyfall* won the Academy Award for Best Original Song in 2013. controlled by their **labels**¹⁴. She is driven, independent, and **immensely**¹⁵ talented. She also feels comfortable in her own skin. Some have even described her as a "force of nature." It's hard to imagine a better female role model for her millions of fans worldwide.

Questions

1. Which sentence is closest to the main point? • Main Idea •

- a Adele broke records at the Grammy Awards.
- b Adele is a special kind of talent.
- c Adele attended the BRIT School for Performing Arts & Technology.
- d Adele recorded three albums.

2. What does this passage describe? • Subject Matter •

- a An album.
- b A song.
- c A musician.
- d A voice.

3. Which of the following statements about Adele is NOT true? • Supporting Details •

- a She didn't like school as a child.
- b She recorded the song "Someone Like You."
- c She was born in Scotland.
- d She has won several Grammy Awards.

4. What can we infer from the passage about Adele's childhood? • Inference •

- a Adele's mom had some struggles with money.
- b Adele didn't like to sing when she was young.
- c Adele didn't have many friends in her neighborhood.
- d Adele was very religious.

5. What does **force of nature** mean in the final paragraph? • Words in Context •

- a Someone who was born rich.
- b Someone with a strong personality.
- c Someone who doesn't like the countryside.
- d Someone who likes being outdoors.

6. What does the author do in the final paragraph to capture the reader's attention? • Clarifying Devices •

- a Shares a personal experience.
- b Presents interesting statistics.
- c Makes a strong argument.
- d Describes several steps.

► Wall Street



02 

History of Wall Street

- What is now New York City was once a Dutch **colony**¹. After the Dutch bought the land from the Native Americans in the area, they built a wall to protect themselves from attacks. The wall lasted for about 50 years in the mid-1600s, but the name it gave to the street that ran along it has lived for centuries.
- Wall Street became a center of **commerce**² early in New York's history. Though it was only a **handful** of blocks long, it connected the East River with other major streets, which made it a convenient place to set up **warehouses**³ for **imported**⁴ goods and **facilities**⁵ for **exports**⁶.
- The idea of buying and selling **bonds**⁷, contracts, and other investments in businesses wasn't new. The first **stock exchange**⁸ was set up in Belgium in 1531, followed by exchanges in Amsterdam and Paris. In New York, wealthy merchants along Wall Street traded stocks by **word of mouth**⁹. They would meet under a buttonwood tree at the end of the street. In 1792, they got tired of this informal state of affairs. That year, a group of men formally **established**¹⁰ what they called The Stock Exchange Office, a formal, regulated **entity**¹¹ to buy and sell stocks through.
- The stock exchange in New York wasn't an instant success. **On the contrary**, in 1817, some members were upset with the poor performance of their exchange and went to observe the **bustling**¹², **thriving**¹³ exchange in Philadelphia. They came back with new ideas and made the first of many changes. In 1863, the organization was given its current name, the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE).





► The NYSE has **weathered the storms**¹⁴, from bubbles, panics, and depression to acts of **terrorism**¹⁵. So far, it continues to **dominate**¹⁶ American finance. In 1800, only about 20 companies were traded publicly. Today, a billion shares change hands every day. Prices rise and fall, but the bell that opens the NYSE every morning just keeps ringing.

Questions

1. What is the main topic of the article? • Main Idea •

a How to succeed on Wall Street.
 b A history of stock exchanges.
 c The NYSE today.
 d How Wall Street rose.

2. What does the passage mainly deal with? • Subject Matter •

a A country.
 b A road.
 c A financial institution.
 d An era.

3. Which of the following statements is NOT true? • Supporting Details •

a The NYSE was not the name of America's first stock exchange.
 b Early traders met under a tree to exchange stocks.
 c The NYSE was the world's first stock exchange.
 d Wall Street was named after a wall.

4. What can we infer about the NYSE from the article? • Inference •

a It was the first of its kind in the world.
 b It's a very durable institution.
 c It has shrunk in power over the years.
 d It is owned and run by the Dutch.

5. The second paragraph mentions a handful of something. What does the word **handful** mean? • Words in Context •

a A small number.
 b A large number.
 c Something that can be manipulated by hand.
 d Something that can be hidden.

6. How is the phrase **on the contrary** used in the fourth paragraph? • Clarity Devices •

a To lead into a contrast.
 b To lead into a myth.
 c To provide context for a quote.
 d To indicate an emotion.

Spray, Connect, Touch

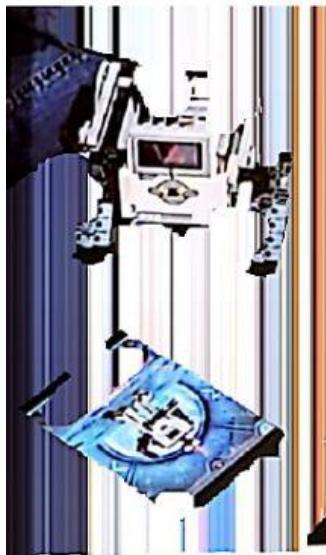


- Touchscreen technology is **commonplace**² nowadays. It's on our phones, on our TV sets, and on our laptops. At the moment, though, touchscreen technology is limited mostly to small, flat surfaces like phone or computer screens. It isn't really **suitable**³ for large or irregular-shaped objects, like toys or living room walls, for example. However, a new **invention**⁴ called Electrick is set to change all that. It could be the first step in turning any surface into a working, **interactive** touchscreen.
- So, what is Electrick exactly, and how does it work? **Essentially**⁵, Electrick is a **conductive**⁶ spray paint. You spray it on something and send a small electric charge through the object. The electrodes attached to the object then detect where you touch. Though it's not quite as **accurate**⁷ as the touchscreen on your smartphone or laptop, it can detect your finger to within about a centimeter. It's also **durable**⁸, able to **retain**⁹ its **sensitivity**¹⁰ over hundreds and hundreds of uses. It's not yet known how well it will work under conditions like rain or **electromagnetic**¹¹ **interference**¹², but it's early days, yet.
- So what exactly could the **applications**¹³ of this spray-on touchscreen be? Think about it—you could place **shortcuts**¹⁴ to your TV's functions on your favorite chair or coffee table. You could turn something like a map into an interactive learning device. How about programming your electric guitar with different sound effects? Then simply turn them on by touching different places on the

► Touchscreen technology is commonplace.



▲ The applications of this spray-on touchscreen is vast. It can detect your hand location and gesture on the steering wheel.



► You can customize toys to respond to your touch.

instrument's body. You could **customize**¹⁵ toys, your house, your car—anything!—to respond to your touch.

- Of course, you must be asking yourself, is it really possible to make anything touch-sensitive? In a word, yes. Electrick technology is not only **compatible**¹⁶ with traditional **manufacturing**¹⁷ methods such as spray-coating and casting. It works with newer, **state-of-the-art**¹⁸ technology like 3-D printing, too. The technology might be brand new, but the possibilities appear to be endless.

Questions

1. What is the author's main point? • Main Idea •

- a Spray-on touchscreens are not yet fully developed.
- b Touchscreens are commonplace nowadays.
- c Spray-on touchscreens have great future potential.
- d Spray-on touchscreens are actually quite durable.

2. What is the article about? • Subject Matter •

- a A new invention.
- b A famous inventor.
- c Interior decoration.
- d The future of smartphones.

3. What is true about spray-on touchscreens? • Supporting Details •

- a They're more accurate than conventional touchscreens.
- b They can be used on irregular-shaped objects.
- c They are completely waterproof.
- d They can be used only on small objects.

4. Which best describes the author's attitude towards spray-on touchscreens? • Inference •

- a He's afraid of them and wants to see them stopped.
- b He thinks they will only be available for rich people.
- c He's looking forward to them becoming more popular.
- d He's not really interested in them.

5. In the first paragraph, the author mentions an interactive surface. If something is **interactive**, what does it do? • Words in Context •

- a Breaks down easily.
- b Refuses to follow instructions.
- c Gives up when things get hard.
- d Responds to a person's input.

6. How does the author structure the article? • Text Form •

- a As a series of questions and answers.
- b As a series of events in a sequence.
- c As a series of personal stories.
- d As a series of causes and effects.

Questions

1. Which sentence is closest to the main point? • Main Idea •

a The Mehndi ceremony is a relaxed and fun tradition.
 b Families and friends are important to the bride.
 c Women in India like to have parties.
 d There are lots of professional henna painters now.

2. What does this passage describe? • Subject Matter •

a A special dress. b A pre-wedding event.
 c A type of colorful paste. d A dinner party.

3. Based on the passage, which is NOT a part of the Mehndi ceremony? • Supporting Details •

a Singing. b Dancing.
 c Body painting. d Cooking a meal.

4. Which of the following is probably true about the Mehndi ceremony? • Inference •

a It lasts for a month. b The groom does not attend.
 c Most brides refuse to take part. d It is a very expensive event.

5. What does it mean to **trace** something's **roots back** as mentioned in the second paragraph? • Words in Context •

a To inspire something. b To be the opposite of something.
 c To come from something. d To hurt something.

6. According to the passage, what is one of the effects of brides using professional henna artists? • Cause and Effect •

a The price of the Mehndi ceremony is going down.
 b The Mehndi ceremony is becoming more popular overseas.
 c Guests are singing and dancing during the Mehndi ceremony.
 d The henna designs are becoming more complex.

Questions

1. What is the main topic of this article? •Main Idea•
 a The founders of sustainable agriculture.
 b The lives of the first farmers.
 c The goals and practices of sustainable agriculture.
 d The pros and cons of sustainable agriculture.

2. What is this passage mainly about? •Subject Matter•
 a A region.
 b A farm.
 c A set of practices.
 d A period of history.

3. Which statement is supported by the passage? •Supporting Details•
 a Sustainable agriculture uses antibiotics and pesticides to ensure meat is safe.
 b Sustainable farming practices maximize production over other concerns.
 c Sustainable agriculture focuses on the needs of plants rather than the needs of workers.
 d Sustainable farming practices extend beyond farms into communities.

4. What is true about rotating crops? •Inference•
 a It is good for the soil.
 b It is bad for the soil.
 c It isn't sustainable.
 d It is bad for productivity.

5. What does the word **deplete** in the second paragraph mean? •Words in Context•
 a Diminish the amount or quality of something.
 b Measure something.
 c Increase the amount of something.
 d Arrange something differently.

6. What does the writer do in the first and second paragraphs? •Clarifying Devices•
 a Tell a personal story.
 b Describe causes and effects.
 c Describe a sequence of steps in a process.
 d Give opinions but no facts.

Questions

1. What is the main topic of the article?

- A The artistic history of Alphonse Mucha.
- B Defining Art Nouveau.
- C The personal life of Alphonse Mucha.
- D A history of print-making.

•Main Idea•

2. What does this article mainly focus on?

- A An artistic style.
- B A period of time.
- C A region.
- D An artist.

•Subject Matter•

3. Which statement is NOT true?

- A Mucha was influenced by paintings from America.
- B Czechoslovakia used to be called Moravia.
- C Mucha was born in 1860.
- D Mucha once worked as a stage designer for theaters.

•Supporting Details•

4. What can we infer from this article about Mucha's *The Slav Epic*?

- A It was highly appreciated in Czechoslovakia.
- B It was commissioned by the Czech government.
- C It was not really appreciated in Czechoslovakia for years.
- D It was a storybook about Czechoslovakia.

•Inference•

5. The second paragraph tells us that Mucha painted portraits.

What is a **portrait**?

- A It is a picture of a person.
- B It is a picture of an object.
- C It is a picture of landscape.
- D It is a picture of a historical scene.

•Words in Context•

6. How is the word **meanwhile** used in the first paragraph?

- A To show that the phrase that follows it happened before the previous one.
- B To show that the phrase that follows it happened after the previous one.
- C To show that the phrase that follows it happened at the same time as the previous one.
- D To show that the phrase that follows it contrasts with the previous one.

•Clarifying Devices•