

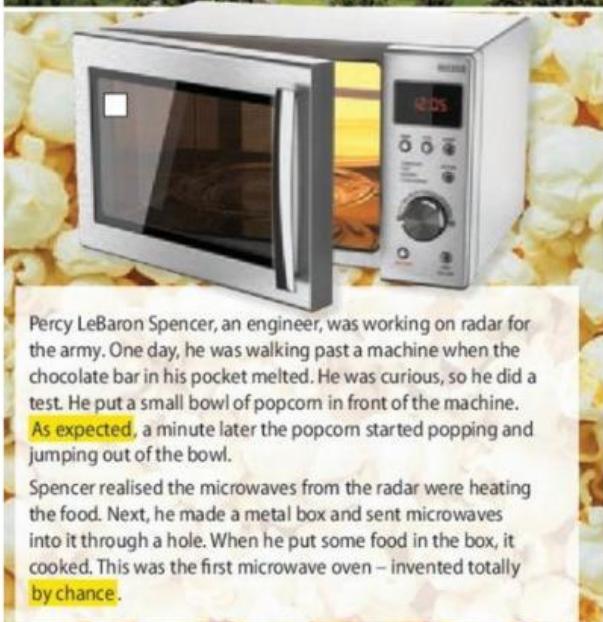
READING COMPREHENSION

LUCKY DISCOVERIES

Some of our most important discoveries happen when we aren't expecting them at all ...

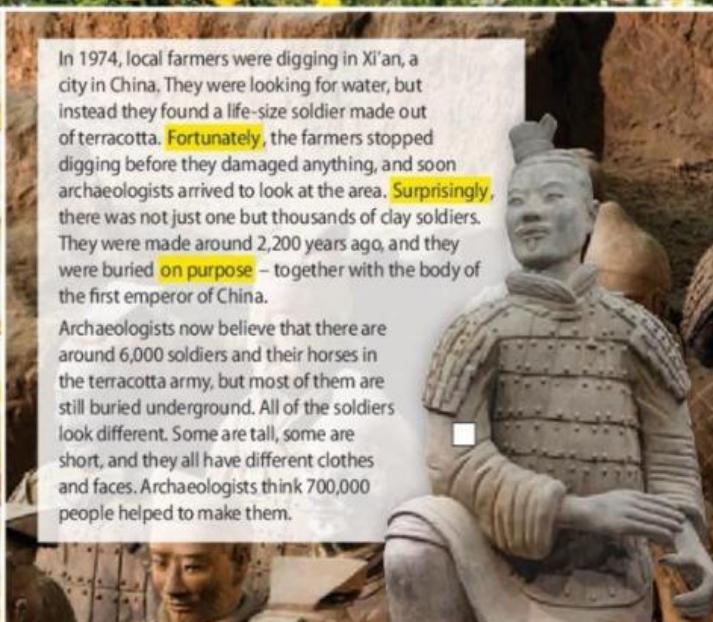
In 1991, two German tourists, Helmut and Erika Simon, were hiking in the mountains in Italy, near the border with Austria. They were coming back down the mountain when one of them saw something in the ice. As they got closer, they realised that they were looking at a man's body. They reported the body and carried on hiking.

When the police arrived the next day, they tried to get the body out of the ice. Everyone thought that it was the body of an unlucky mountain climber, and they weren't very careful. They accidentally tore the clothes and also broke one arm. But when scientists studied the body, they were shocked. Amazingly, the body was 5,000 years old. He was quickly given the name Ötzi the Iceman. Ötzi is one of the oldest, most complete human bodies ever found.



Percy LeBaron Spencer, an engineer, was working on radar for the army. One day, he was walking past a machine when the chocolate bar in his pocket melted. He was curious, so he did a test. He put a small bowl of popcorn in front of the machine. As expected, a minute later the popcorn started popping and jumping out of the bowl.

Spencer realised the microwaves from the radar were heating the food. Next, he made a metal box and sent microwaves into it through a hole. When he put some food in the box, it cooked. This was the first microwave oven – invented totally by chance.



In 1974, local farmers were digging in Xi'an, a city in China. They were looking for water, but instead they found a life-size soldier made out of terracotta. Fortunately, the farmers stopped digging before they damaged anything, and soon archaeologists arrived to look at the area. Surprisingly, there was not just one but thousands of clay soldiers. They were made around 2,200 years ago, and they were buried on purpose – together with the body of the first emperor of China.

Archaeologists now believe that there are around 6,000 soldiers and their horses in the terracotta army, but most of them are still buried underground. All of the soldiers look different. Some are tall, some are short, and they all have different clothes and faces. Archaeologists think 700,000 people helped to make them.

Now read the stories and answer the questions for each story.

- 1 Who made the discovery?
- 2 What were they doing when they made the discovery?
- 3 What exactly was the invention/discovery?

Read the stories again and answer the questions.

- 1 How did Percy LeBaron Spencer test his machine?
- 2 Why weren't the police careful with Ötzi's body? What damage did they do?
- 3 Why don't archaeologists know exactly how many terracotta soldiers there are?



Ask and answer the questions.

- 1 Which discovery do you think was the luckiest?
- 2 How important do you think each of the discoveries was? Put them in order from 1 to 3, where 1 is the most important. Give reasons.
- 3 What important discoveries can you think of from your lifetime?