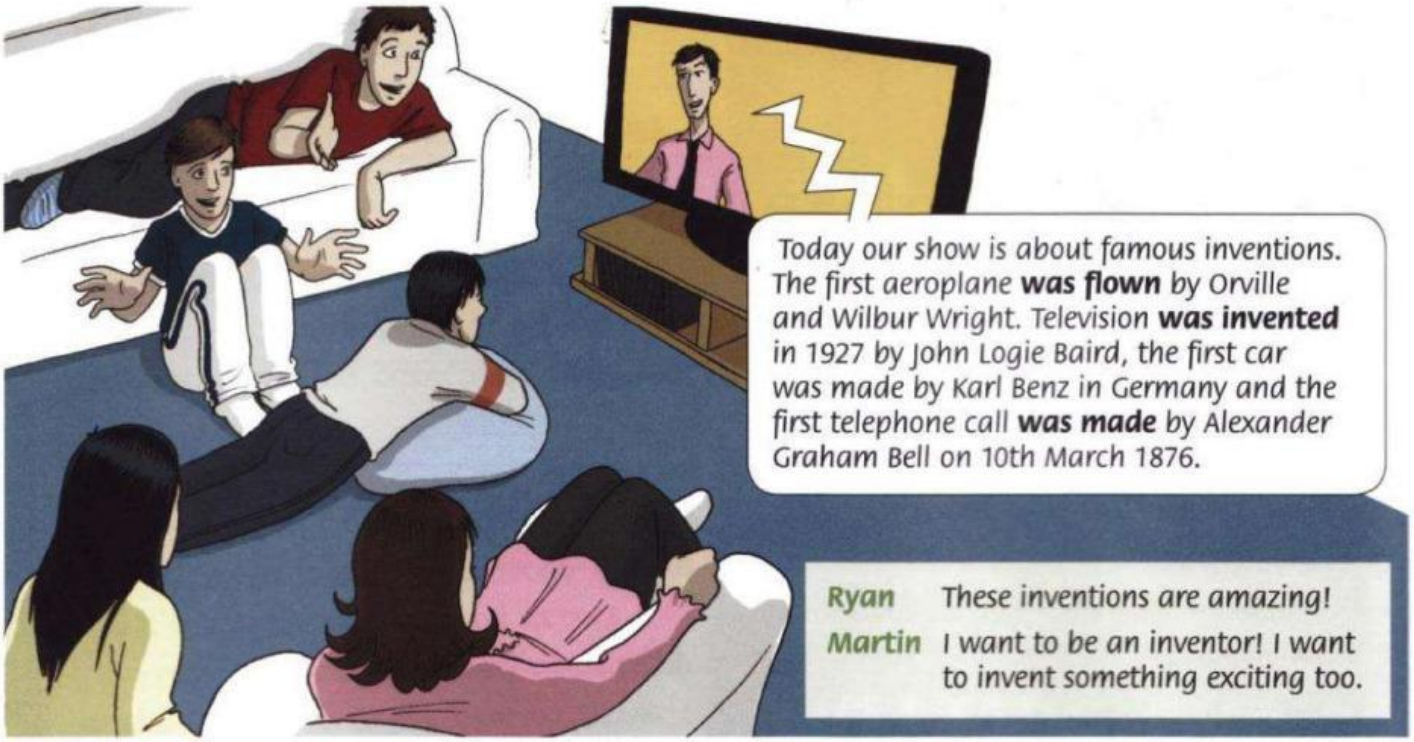
12 Famous inventions

The passive (2): past simple
The passive (3): questions



The past simple passive

We use **was/were (not)** + past participle to make the past simple passive.

*The first aeroplane **was invented** by Orville and Wilbur Wright.*

*The first aeroplane **wasn't invented** by John Logie Baird.*

There is a list of irregular past participles on page 96.

1 Which sentences are passive? Write P or –.

1 The first explorer was an ancient Egyptian. –
2 Ferdinand Magellan was the first person to sail around the world. ____
3 The Pacific Ocean was named by Ferdinand Magellan. ____
4 The explorer travelled for years in Europe and Africa. ____
5 The first map of Australia was drawn by Captain James Cook. ____
6 The South Pole was first visited in 1911. ____
7 The first rocket was sent to the moon in 1969. ____
8 The picture was painted with oil paints. ____

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2 Read the test. Circle the correct answers.

The very first computers [1] **invented / were invented** about 2500 years ago. Simple machines called abacuses [2] **made / were made** by the ancient Egyptians. These machines [3] **used / were used** for thousands of years. A computer [4] **invented / was invented** nearly 500 years ago by Blaize Pascal but it only [5] **added / was added** numbers. Alan Turing [6] **made / was made** a different machine 80 years ago. It [7] **did / was done** more than any person could do. Then about thirty years ago, the first personal computers [8] **sold / were sold**. Now, of course, they [9] **were bought / are bought** all over the world.

3 Write the words in the correct order. Use the past simple passive.

1 the wheel / 6000 years ago / invented / was
The wheel was invented 6000 years ago.

2 sailing boats / by / were / the ancient Egyptians / made

3 were / by the Romans / thousands of roads / built

4 were / carried / important Romans / on chairs

5 the first / was / train station / 200 years ago / opened

6 the first bicycles / made / were / in France

7 sold / the first cars / in Germany / were

8 the Eiffel Tower / was / in 1889 / built

9 was / this song / sung / a famous singer / by

10 in Oxford in England / that dictionary / was / written

LIVEWORKSHEETS

4 Complete the sentences. Use the past simple passive.

1 The Olympic games were invented (invent) by the ancient Greeks.
2 Football _____ (play) thousands of years ago in South America.
3 The children _____ (ask) to help their mum.
4 The football captain _____ (tell) to choose a new team.
5 Horses _____ (ride) for sport in ancient India.
6 The tennis match _____ (watch) by lots of people.
7 The money _____ (give) to the children's school.
8 The cinema _____ (open) by the famous actor.

5 Rewrite the sentences. Use the past simple passive.

1 Someone invented television in 1927.
Television was invented in 1927.
2 Somebody interviewed my favourite singer last night.
My favourite singer _____
3 They paid her for the interview.
She _____
4 Somebody asked about her favourite music.
She _____
5 Somebody took photographs of her.
Photographs of her _____
6 People bought lots of her music last year.
Lots of her music _____

6 Write sentences. Use the past simple passive and by if necessary.

1 Chess / play / in ancient Persia.
Chess was played in ancient Persia.
2 Many famous pictures / paint / Leonardo da Vinci.
_____
3 The play Hamlet / write / William Shakespeare.
_____
4 The pyramids / build / thousands of years ago.
_____
5 The first aeroplane / fly / across the Atlantic / Alcock and Brown.
_____

LIVEWORKSHEETS

7 Look at the table. Complete the active and passive sentences. Use the past simple.

A life in music: Jamie Johnson, singer	
1984	He is born.
1987 to 1996	He lives in London with his parents.
1996	He goes to school in the countryside.
1996 to 2003	He learns to play the piano and guitar. Goes to music school. His teachers are professional musicians.
2005	He leaves school.
2007	He makes his first CD.
2008	A magazine interviews him.
2009	Jamie wins a song writing competition.

1 Jamie was born (be born) in 1984.

2 From 1987 to 1996 he _____ (live) in London.

3 In 1996 he _____ (send) to school in the country.

4 From 1996 to 2003 he _____ (learn) to play the piano and guitar.

5 From 1996 to 2003 he _____ (teach) by professional musicians.

6 In 2005 he _____ (leave) school.

7 In 2007 his first CD _____ (make).

8 In 2008 he _____ (interview) by a famous magazine.

9 In 2009 he _____ (win) a song writing competition.

8 Complete the sentences. Use the present simple passive or the past simple passive with the verbs in brackets.

1 She was asked (ask) to act in the play.

2 The gates to the park _____ (open) at 9 o'clock on Saturdays.

3 You _____ (born) two years after me.

4 On Wednesday, I _____ (give) a new computer.

5 Billy _____ (not teach) French at his school.

6 We _____ (help) in our school lessons every day.

7 You mustn't walk on the grass. It _____ (write) on the sign.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Great new TV quiz show

Can you answer these questions?

Who was the first plane invented by?
When was television invented?
Where was the first car invented?
What was invented on 10th March 1876?

If you know the answers and want to appear on TV in a great new TV quiz show, call us!

Passive questions

We make passive questions with **be** + subject + past participle.
*Are monkeys **found** in England?*

We put **by** and **with** at the end of the questions.
*Who was the first plane invented **by**?*

We can put wh- question words at the beginning of the question. If we use **who**, **when** or **where**, the word order doesn't change.
***When** was television invented?*

If we use **what**, we make passive questions like this: **what** + **be** + past participle.
***What was invented** on 10th March 1976?*

9 Circle the correct answers.

1 **Is** / **Are** / **Was** films made in the United Kingdom?
2 **Was** / **Is** / **Are** the film made last year?
3 **Where** / **When** / **Who** was the film directed by?
4 **Who** / **What** / **When** was the play written by?
5 **Who** / **Where** / **What** was given to Sam's friends?
6 **Where** / **Who** / **What** was the film made?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

10 Write past simple passive questions.

1 an email / send / yesterday
Was an email sent yesterday?

2 your house / paint / last year

3 who / the book / write / by

4 the printer / switch off / this morning

5 where / the tigers / see / yesterday

6 what / Roman houses / make / with

7 when / the history museum / build

8 football / play / everywhere / 100 years ago

9 who / your bedroom / clean / by

10 where / gold / find / in 1849

11 Read the text. Write past simple questions. Use When, Where, Who or What.

William Shakespeare

Shakespeare is the most famous English writer in history. He went to school in Stratford, England, and moved to London to become an actor. Then he started to write plays. One of his best plays is called Hamlet. He wrote Hamlet in 1600 or 1601. The main character, who is called Hamlet, speaks a very famous line: 'To be or not to be'.

Shakespeare worked in a theatre called The Globe in 1599, which was made with wood. It was one of the most famous buildings in London until it was closed in 1644. A copy of The Globe was opened to tourists in 1997.

1 Shakespeare wrote Hamlet in London.
Where was Hamlet written?

2 Shakespeare was taught in Stratford.

3 Hamlet was written in 1600 or 1601.

4 The famous line is spoken by Hamlet.

5 The Globe was made with wood.

6 The Globe was built in 1599.

7 The Globe was closed in 1644.

8 Tourists visit The Globe.

LIVEWORKSHEETS