Name_____

Early Inventions

After the Civil War and up to the 1900s, industry began to boom in American cities. New industry brought people to the urban areas, and populations boomed. As transportation expanded, so did the cities, and for the first time in American history, people were moving into the suburbs. This economical growth led to many inventions still seen and used today.

During this time period, skyscrapers were new to America's skyline. The name derived from the idea that the buildings were so tall they "scraped the sky." Development of the steel industry helped make these buildings possible. Of course, taller buildings needed another invention: elevators. People needed a way to reach the highest floors of these new, colossal structures. Elevators had been used previously for moving freight. However, earlier elevators were often unsafe, and people did not ride them because they would crash without warning. Elisha Otis created a safety device that would prevent an elevator from crashing even if the cable on the elevator broke. This invention helped move elevators for people into skyscrapers, making the tall buildings practical for everyone.

Electricity was another important invention during this time. Thomas Edison created the first incandescent light bulb in 1879. This first invention led to the creation of the materials needed to generate the power to run electrical lighting. Electrical power led to other inventions, such as trolley cars powered by electricity. The electrical motors in the trolley cars were powered by an overhead wire located above the tracks. People loved the smooth ride of the trolleys, and such economical transportation helped people move outside the busy cities and into the suburbs.

Text Questions

1. What does the term "urban areas" mean as it is used in the first paragraph?
   a. places in the country or rural areas
   b. places just outside the city
   c. places out West
   d. places in the city

2. The first paragraph explains that the population boomed because of increased industry. What does the word *boomed* mean as it is used in this sentence?
   a. increased
   b. decreased
   c. remained stagnant
   d. moved to other areas

3. Write three or four complete sentences comparing how electricity was important in America's early history and why electricity is still important today.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

4. What was the author's purpose in writing this text?
   a. to explain the importance of transportation in America's early history
   b. to remember the importance of Thomas Edison
   c. to entertain the reader with stories of the past
   d. to give information about inventions that were an important part of America's history

5. Which answer best explains how skyscrapers became feasible inventions?
   a. the growth of the steel industry and the invention of trolleys
   b. the growth of the steel industry and the invention of passenger elevators
   c. the invention of passenger elevators and electricity
   d. the invention of electrical power and passenger elevators

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Name_____

Women's Suffrage

In the early part of the 1900s, an era of reform began to sweep across America. One important part of this movement was granting suffrage to women. The passage of the fifteenth amendment gave all men the right to vote, as African-American men were given the same privilege as white males. However, women of any race still lacked the same privilege to vote that all males in America had already achieved.

The suffrage movement led by such women as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton was the start of equal rights for women. These early suffragettes helped pave the road to give women the right to vote. Many people were against giving women this privilege—including some women! People during this time often believed women could not handle the responsibility of voting and should leave such decisions to the men. This attitude, however, did not stop the determined women of the suffrage movement.

Gatherings known as suffragette parades were one method used to gain attention for the cause. At first, the parades were greeted with much opposition, but eventually the determined citizens won support for their cause. The passage of the nineteenth amendment finally gave adult women of all races the much deserved right to vote.

Text Questions

1. Why is suffrage for women important?
   a. Women feel important.
   b. The opinion of women can be heard equally with that of men.
   c. People love any reason to have a parade.
   d. People of all ages deserve the right to vote.
2. What does the phrase "pave the road" mean as it is used in the second paragraph?
   a. end
   b. continue
   c. start
   d. finalize
3. Why would the suffragette parades have been met with opposition?
   a. Everyone wanted women to have the right to vote.
   b. Children wanted their mothers at home.
   c. The parades held up traffic in major cities.
   d. Not everyone wanted women to have the right to vote.
4. What was important about the nineteenth amendment?
   a. Women were given the right to vote.
   b. Former slaves were given the right to vote.
   c. Anyone over the age of sixteen was given the right to vote.
   d. Women were denied the right to vote.
5. Which title would be a good alternative for this text?
   a. "Everyone is Equal"
   b. "Women Earn the Right to Vote"
   c. "Suffrage Doesn't Mean Suffer"
   d. "Fight for the Right"

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LIVEWORKSHEETS

Name_____

The Roaring Twenties

The period after World War I is often referred to as the Roaring Twenties. During this time in American history, much of the younger generation simply wanted to enjoy life after surviving all the horror of the Great War. Much literature, art, and music was produced during this time of cultural change. Jazz music became a favorite among those looking for something different, and the Charleston became all the rage as people danced away their blues.

Many American citizens were able to enjoy an easier lifestyle, which helped create the time known as the Roaring Twenties. Inventions for completing housework made the tasks, which had typically been handled by women, much easier. This freed up time for women, giving them time to enjoy music, poetry, and leisure time. Technology also improved in creating movies. People began going to see films that now had sound and not just pictures. Through this improved technology, people were able to see what was going on in other parts of the world, and they were able to feel connected to other people living in different areas of the United States as they listened to the same radio programs and watched the same movies.

Sports also saw an upswing in popularity during this time in American history. Crowds began flocking to sporting events, hoping to catch even a glimpse of their favorite players. Baseball legend Babe Ruth and boxer Jack Dempsey became popular during this time as fans followed their every move. People enjoyed attending sporting events and the feeling that the good times of the 1920s would never end. Sadly, the time of economic boom and good times would soon dissolve into one of the worst financial and social disasters of America's history: the Great Depression.

Text Questions

1. Why did people want to have a good time during the 1920s?
   a. Everyone loved to dance and sing.
   b. Everyone was a huge fan of jazz.
   c. Everyone wanted to forget the horror of World War I.
   d. Everyone wanted to spend money in America to help the economy.
2. Which part of the text explains why women were able to enjoy more leisure time during the 1920s?
   a. first paragraph
   b. second paragraph
   c. third paragraph
   d. the title
3. What evidence from the text helps you to explain your answer for question two?

   _____

   _____

   _____
4. What does the word *upswing* mean as it is used in the third paragraph?
   a. a decrease
   b. an increase
   c. a steady drop
   d. to remain the same
5. What would be a primary source a person could use to find out more about Babe Ruth?
   a. an encyclopedia entry
   b. a baseball almanac
   c. a blog about baseball
   d. an autobiography about Babe Ruth

LIVEWORKSHEETS