

Great Victorian Inventions

Today, let's talk about Victorian inventions. Do you know of any? There were many. Here's a few of them...

In 1840 the Victorians introduced the first prepaid postal service that used a postal stamp. Letters could be sent anywhere in the UK for one penny using a stamp called the Penny Black. In 1859 a green national standard post box was introduced. Later British post boxes became red.

The bicycle was invented in 1838 by a Scotsman called Kirkpatrick MacMillan. It was a pedal-driven bicycle known at the time as a velocipede. The penny-farthing bicycle was invented in 1872 by a James Stanley. It had a huge front wheel and a tiny rear wheel. Many bikes of the period were known as boneshakers due to their extremely uncomfortable ride.

In August 1858 Queen Victoria sent one of the first telexes across the Atlantic using a transatlantic telegraph cable to the then US President James Buchanan. Alexander Graham Bell invented the first practical telephone in 1876. Thomas Parker invented the first electric car in 1884. As he was more into developing electric trams and electrifying London Underground his idea did not evolve further.

In 1900 an Englishman called Hubert Booth developed his idea of a vacuum cleaner. Previously an American had developed a machine that blew air out. Booth pursued his idea, perfecting it to suck air into the bag.

Contrary to popular belief Thomas Crapper did not invent the flushing toilet! In the 19th century he ran a plumbing company. He did invent the ballcock. His company heavily promoted sanitary plumbing as well as the bathroom fitting showroom!

SPEAKING – WARM UP

Think of three things you know about Victorian inventions. Go round the room swapping details with others.

LISTENING – WRITING - DICTATION

The teacher will read some lines of the article slowly to the class.

READING

Students should now read the article aloud, swapping readers every paragraph.

SPEAKING - UNDERSTANDING

1) The article – Students check any unknown vocabulary or phrases with the teacher.

2) The article - Students should look through the article with the teacher.

- 1) What is the article about?
- 2) What do you think about the article?
- 3) Was this an easy or difficult article to understand?
- 4) Was this a boring or interesting article?
- 5) Discuss the article.

3) Article quiz - Students quiz each other in pairs. Score a point for each correct answer. Score half a point each time you have to look at the article for help. See who can get the highest score!

Student A questions

- 1) What was a Penny Black?
- 2) Who was Thomas Crapper?
- 3) Who was Queen Victoria?
- 4) Explain what a penny-farthing bicycle looks like.
- 5) What did Kirkpatrick MacMillan invent?

Student B questions

- 1) What happened in 1840?
- 2) Who invented the first practical telephone?
- 3) What did Thomas Parker invent?
- 4) What happened in August 1858?
- 5) What colour were British post boxes?

Great Victorian Inventions - 20th September 2014

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs. On the board write as many words as you can to do with **'Great Victorian Inventions.** *One-two minutes.* Using your words compile a short dialogue together.

WRITING / SPEAKING

In pairs – Choose three inventions things from the article. Write them below. Talk about them.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Add three Great Victorian Inventors. What did they invent? What are your conclusions?

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

The teacher will choose some pairs to discuss their findings in front of the class.

WRITING / SPEAKING

On the board - As a class – List five inventions from each of the following time periods:-

- a) 0-5 years ago
- b) 5-50 years ago
- c) 51-100 years ago

DISCUSSION

Student A questions

- 1) Did the headline make you want to read the article?
- 2) What was a farthing?
- 3) How did a farthing differ from a penny?
- 4) Have you ever ridden a penny-farthing?
- 5) What type of vacuum cleaner do you have? How does it work?
- 6) Why is Thomas Crapper so famous?
- 7) How important was the invention of the telephone?
- 8) What colour are post boxes in your country?
- 9) How long was Queen Victoria on the throne?
- 10) Have you learnt anything in today's English lesson?

SPEAKING – ROLEPLAY 1

In groups. You are one of the following four guests or are the interviewer. You are in the *History FM* radio studio. Today's interview is: *Great Victorian Inventions. 10 mins.*

- 1) Alexander Graham Bell.
- 2) Thomas Crapper.
- 3) James Stanley/Kirkpatrick MacMillan.
- 4) Hubert Booth.

The teacher will choose some groups to roleplay their interview in front of the class.

SPEAKING - ROLEPLAY 2

In pairs. You are in a London museum. *Student A* is a history student. *Student B* is a curator/tour guide in the museum. *Student A* would like some information on some of the Victorian inventions that are in the museum. *5 mins.*

SPEAKING – DISCUSSION

Allow 10 minutes – As a class.

20 Great Victorian Inventions
Google them first!

The teacher can moderate the session.

DISCUSSION

Student B questions

- 1) What do you think about what you've read?
- 2) How inventive were the Victorians?
- 3) Do you think the British Empire encouraged new inventions?
- 4) How did the development of the steam train network affect inventions?
- 5) Can you think of any device you use today that was invented by the Victorians?
- 6) Have you invented anything? What?
- 7) Have any of your friends invented anything useful?
- 8) How important is sanitary plumbing in big cities like London?
- 9) What do you think Queen Victoria wrote to the US President James Buchanan in August 1858?
- 10) Did you like this discussion?

GAP FILL: READING

Great Victorian Inventions

Today, let's talk about (1)___ (2)__. Do you know of any? There were many. Here's a few of them...

In 1840 the Victorians introduced the first prepaid postal service that used a postal stamp. Letters could be sent anywhere in the UK for one (3)___ using a stamp called the Penny Black. In 1859 a green national (4)___ post box was introduced. Later British post boxes became red.

The (5)___ was invented in 1838 by a Scotsman called Kirkpatrick MacMillan. It was a pedal-driven bicycle known at the time as a (6)__. The (7)___ bicycle was invented in 1872 by a James Stanley. It had a huge front wheel and a tiny rear wheel. Many bikes of the period were known as (8)___ due to their extremely uncomfortable ride.

boneshakers / inventions / bicycle / Victorian / standard / velocipede / penny-farthing / penny

In August 1858 Queen Victoria sent one of the first telexes across the Atlantic using a (1)___ telegraph cable to the then US President James Buchanan. Alexander Graham Bell invented the first (2)___ telephone in 1876. Thomas Parker invented the first electric car in 1884. As he was more into developing electric trams and electrifying London Underground his idea did not (3)___ further.

In 1900 an Englishman called Hubert Booth developed his idea of a (4)__. Previously an American had developed a machine that blew air out. Booth pursued his idea, perfecting it to suck air into the bag.

Contrary to popular (5)___ Thomas Crapper did not invent the flushing toilet! In the 19th century he ran a (6)___ company. He did invent the (7)__. His company heavily promoted (8)___ plumbing as well as the bathroom fitting showroom!

ballcock / transatlantic / vacuum cleaner / sanitary / evolve / practical / belief / plumbing

GAP FILL: GRAMMAR

Great Victorian Inventions

Today, let's talk about Victorian inventions. Do (1)___ know of (2)___? (3)___ were (4)__. (5)___'s a few of (6)___...

In 1840 (7)___ Victorians introduced the first prepaid postal service that used a postal stamp. Letters could be sent anywhere in the UK for one penny using a stamp called the Penny Black. In 1859 a green national standard post box was introduced. Later British post boxes became red.

The bicycle was invented in 1838 by a Scotsman called Kirkpatrick MacMillan. It was a pedal-driven bicycle known at the time as a velocipede. The penny-farthing bicycle was invented in 1872 by a James Stanley. It had a huge front wheel (8)___ a tiny rear wheel. Many bikes of the period were known as boneshakers due to their extremely uncomfortable ride.

many / them / there / here / any / you / and / the

In August 1858 Queen Victoria sent one of the first telexes across the Atlantic using a transatlantic telegraph cable to the (1)___ US President James Buchanan. Alexander Graham Bell invented the first practical telephone in 1876. Thomas Parker invented the first electric car in 1884. As he was (2)___ into developing electric trams and electrifying London Underground his idea did not evolve further.

(3)___ 1900 an Englishman called Hubert Booth developed his idea of a vacuum cleaner. Previously an American had developed a machine that blew air out. Booth pursued (4)___ idea, perfecting (5)___ to suck air (6)___ the bag.

Contrary to popular belief Thomas Crapper did not invent the flushing toilet! In the 19th century he ran a plumbing company. (7)___ did invent the ballcock. His company heavily promoted sanitary plumbing (8)___ the bathroom fitting showroom!

into / more / then / as well as / it / in / his / he

GAP FILL: LISTENING

Great Victorian Inventions

Today, let's talk about _____. Do you know of any? There were many. Here's a few of them...

In 1840 the Victorians introduced the first _____ that used a postal stamp. Letters could be sent anywhere in the UK for one penny using a stamp _____. In 1859 a green national standard post box was introduced. Later British post boxes became red.

The bicycle was invented in 1838 by a Scotsman called Kirkpatrick MacMillan. It was a pedal-driven bicycle known at the time _____. The penny-farthing bicycle was invented in 1872 by a James Stanley. It had a huge front wheel and a tiny rear wheel. Many bikes of the period were known as boneshakers due to their _____ ride.

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In 1900 an Englishman called Hubert Booth developed his idea of a vacuum cleaner. Previously an American had developed a machine that blew air out. _____, perfecting it to suck air into the bag.

Contrary to popular _____ did not invent the flushing toilet! In the 19th century he ran a plumbing company. He did invent the ballcock. His company heavily promoted sanitary plumbing as well as the _____!

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WRITING/SPELLING

WRITING / SPEAKING

1) On the board - *On the board* - As a class - 20 great inventors - modern or historic! What did they invent? Google them! Discuss together!

2) Sentence starters - Finish these sentence starters. Correct your mistakes. Compare what other people have written.

- 1) Other Victorian inventions _____
- 2) The bicycle _____
- 3) The Penny Black _____

3) Homework - Write and send a 200 word email to your teacher about: **Great Victorian Inventions**. Your email can be read out in class.

GAP FILL READING

- 1) Victorian
- 2) inventions
- 3) penny
- 4) standard
- 5) bicycle
- 6) velocipede
- 7) penny-farthing
- 8) boneshaker

ANSWERS

- 1) transatlantic
- 2) practical
- 3) evolve
- 4) vacuum cleaner
- 5) belief
- 6) plumbing
- 7) ballcock
- 8) sanitary

SPELLING

The teacher will ask the class individually to spell the following words that are in the article. Afterwards check your answers.

- 1) Victorian
- 2) practical
- 3) bicycle
- 4) standard
- 5) inventions
- 6) penny
- 7) velocipede
- 8) tiny
- 9) wheel
- 10) boneshaker

SPELLING

Use the following ratings:

Pass = 12

Good = 15

Very good = 18

Excellent = 20

- 11) further
- 12) transatlantic
- 13) telegraph
- 14) vacuum cleaner
- 15) cleaner
- 16) contrary
- 17) flushing
- 18) ballcock
- 19) sanitary
- 20) until

Great Victorian Inventions - *20th September 2014*