

The Top 5 Ancient Chinese Inventions

1. **Compass**

The date is unknown, but is widely praised as the best invention of the Chinese.

2. **Rudder**

It is unknown when the rudder was invented, but it first appeared in China

3. **Deep drilling for gas**

A technique developed in 100 BC and is still used today, known as deep drilling for gas. The devices that were used were remarkably large and well crafted for the time.

4. **Gun powder**

It is not exactly known when Gun Powder was invented, but it must have been before the seventeenth century BC when Fireworks were first used. (Another great Chinese invention.)

5. **Parachute**

The first documentation of the parachute was in 90 BC, but it had been around for at least 100 years before that.

The Top 5 British Inventions

1. **The steam locomotive**

At the age of twenty, George Stephenson began to make the first locomotive. It was tested on the Cillingwood Railway on July 25, 1814. The track was four hundred and fifty feet and went up a steep hill. George Stephenson's engine hauled eight loaded coal wagons weighing thirty tons. This was the first steam engine powered locomotive to run on a railroad.

2. **The pocket calculator**

In the summer of 1972 Sinclair produced the first electronic pocket calculator, the *Executive*.

3. **The first pneumatic tyres**

Dunlop was a vet, who had to travel many rough roads in Ireland, so he experimented with his son's tricycle and in 1887 he came up with a design based on an inflated rubber tube and patented it the following year.

4. **The World Wide Web**

The World Wide Web was developed in 1989 by English computer scientist Timothy Berners-Lee who wanted information to be shared among teams of researchers who were far away from each other.

5. **Television**

John Logie Baird obtained the world's first real television picture in his laboratory in October, 1925, and demonstrated it to the British public on January 26, 1926. The image obtained was a small 30-line vertically-scanned red and black image, but it was television. Mechanical television based on Baird's systems dominated international television for the next few years into the early 30's.

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Questions

Mark the following questions True, False or Not Given

1. Drilling is still done the same way today as it was done in 100BC in China.
2. Gun Powder was invented after the seventeenth century BC.
3. The parachute was invented in 90 BC.
4. Steam Engines were a popular form of transport in the 1800's
5. Timothy Berners-Lee knew all of the researchers on the teams.
6. John Logie Baird demonstrated television to the public in 1926.

Discuss

1. Which invention is the most useful?
2. Are any of these inventions bad for people?
3. How can people be encouraged to be creative?

Write

Choose a topic to write on:

1. Compare and contrast two of these inventions
2. Who do you think contributed more with their inventions, the British or Chinese?
3. What has your country invented? Compare it to the inventions listed.
4. What are the three best and three worst inventions in the world?


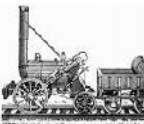








Further Reading

- Great British Inventions - <http://www.historic-uk.com/CultureUK/BestifBrits.htm>
- British Inventions lesson plan - <http://www.britishcouncil.org/languageassistant-innovation-nation.htm>
- Ten Best inventions of the Chinese - <http://www.quazen.com/Reference/Education/10-best-inventions-of-the-Ancient-Chinese.10314>
- Four Great Inventions of Ancient China - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Great_Inventions_of_ancient_China

Cut Out Inventions

Teaching Suggestion

1. Cut Out The Ideas
2. Ask Students to divide them into:
 - Old Inventions and New Inventions
 - Chinese Inventions and British inventions
3. Check with other tables to see if they get the correct answers. Handout reading exercise.
4. Translate/explain words as necessary (Hopefully pictures will provide visual explanations)

 Compass	 Steam locomotive
 Rudder	 Pocket calculator
 Deep drilling for gas	 Pneumatic tyres
 Gun powder	 World Wide Web
 Parachute	 Television

Teacher's Notes

T / F / NG Answers

Drilling is still done the same way today as it was done in 100BC in China.

1. F - Must have been in the seventeenth century or before
2. F - "...but it had been around for at least 100 years before that."
3. NG - It does not say in the text. (They did become very popular later in the century.)
4. NG - It does not say in the text.
5. T - Yes, he demonstrated to the British public in 1926.

Teaching Ideas

This reading text would naturally lead into a lesson on comparatives and superlatives. A grammar handout can be found at: <http://www.jamesabela.co.uk/intermediate/index.htm>

Personalisation

Use the opportunity to encourage students to talk about what they find most useful and/or what they would miss if it was not invented.