

TECHNOLOGY THROUGH THE AGES QUIZ

01 The word philosopher means “lover of wisdom” so it’s no surprise that philosophers were considered to be very clever people. Socrates was one of the first philosophers, who lived in Greece more than 2000 years ago.

What did Socrates think would cause young people to be forgetful?

- a) writing b) skipping c) listening to heavy metal music d) daydreaming

Answer: a) Writing - *Socrates famously warned that writing would “create forgetfulness in the learners’ souls”. Instead Socrates felt that discussions and talking were necessary to help people understand and remember information. Socrates also advised parents not to let their kids read fantasy novels as they might confuse make-believe with reality.*

02 Some of the greatest advances in technology have been to do with how we travel. It used to take up to four months to make the journey from Ireland to Australia but now you can do it in about 20 hours. The improvements in transport dramatically improved people’s lives but also frightened many people, at first.

What mode of transport was considered so fast that it would lead to choking and organs falling out of people’s bodies?

- a) fighter jet b) train c) Space Mountain d) race car

Answer: b) Train – *There were all kinds of objections to rail travel in the 19th century. A doctor at University College London famously said “Rail travel at high speed is not possible because passengers, unable to breathe, would die of asphyxia (or choking).” Other people claimed that high speeds of 20 km/h would peel off passengers’ faces and cause organs to fall out of passengers’ bodies when they travelled by train.*

03 Technology also transformed life in the home. Before electricity a simple task such as washing clothes took hours of physically exhausting labour, while boiling water meant lighting a fire first. Though electricity made the lives of people easier, people were at first suspicious of electricity.

What regular household item did people fear might be a fire hazard and cause death, when it was first released?

- a) light bulb b) cooker c) television d) radiator

Answer: a) Light bulb – *There were great worries about electricity and light bulbs when they were first invented. People feared that light bulbs might lead to fires and even electrocution. President Benjamin Harrison was the first US president to have electricity in the White House but both he and his wife were so afraid of touching light switches that they often went to bed with the lights on.*

04 Often times it can be hard to tell what inventions will take off and become really popular. Some of the world's most important inventions, including x-rays and pacemakers, were created completely by accident. Therefore you have to understand US President Hayes' uncertainty when shown another new invention.

What new invention did the President think no one would ever want to use?

a) playstation **b)** bicycle **c)** telephone **d)** mp3 player

Answer: c) Telephone - *Many adults (and kids!) nowadays say they couldn't survive without their phones. It's hard to believe it but when the US president of the time, President Rutherford B. Hayes was first shown the telephone in 1876 he said "That's an amazing invention but who would ever want to use one of them?" Other people feared telephones because they thought that people would no longer meet up with each other or the ringing might drive people mad.*

05 It's not unusual to hear adults worry that video games will encourage children to run riot and copy the stunts they see on screen. In fact adults have been worrying about the effects of different pastimes on children, since long before the invention of the video game.

What form of entertainment was once accused of turning children into criminals?

a) movies **b)** comics **c)** yoyos **d)** water guns

Answer: b) Comics – *Dr Frederic Wertham was a well-known psychiatrist who referred to any book about good guys and bad guys as a "crime comic book". A psychiatrist is a medical doctor who specialises in the human mind and mental illness. Because Wertham was thought of as an expert, many parents started to believe him and worried that reading superhero comic books would lead children to a life in crime.*

EXTENSION ACTIVITY USING TECHNOLOGY:

- ▶ If facilities allow, have students use tablets or computers to look up and show their favourite websites to their peers in Activity 1.

