

WORLD HISTORY READERS

Level 6 - O

The History of Transportation

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**Seed
Learning**



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Changing Transportation

We have come a long way since we had only our own feet to transport things from place to place.

We figured out that animals could do heavy work for us. We trained horses and other large animals, invented the wheel, and built carriages. To carry things on water, we made rafts, canoes, and then bigger boats.

Have you ever wondered how modern cars, planes, spaceships, and ships were invented? Have you ever wondered what the future has in store for us?



An Egyptian boat made of tied papyrus reeds



A prehistoric stone wheel



An ancient wooden cart

Science and Technology Matter

For centuries, the development of transportation was slow. It was based on improving wheeled vehicles drawn by horses and inventing larger sail boats.

At the end of the 18th century, the Industrial Revolution changed everything.

We learned how to build machines with iron and how to power them with steam. With this new technology, we could move things faster and more easily.

Additional vehicles were created and improved by new scientific discoveries. Modern cars, planes, and boats are the result of progress made in science and technology.

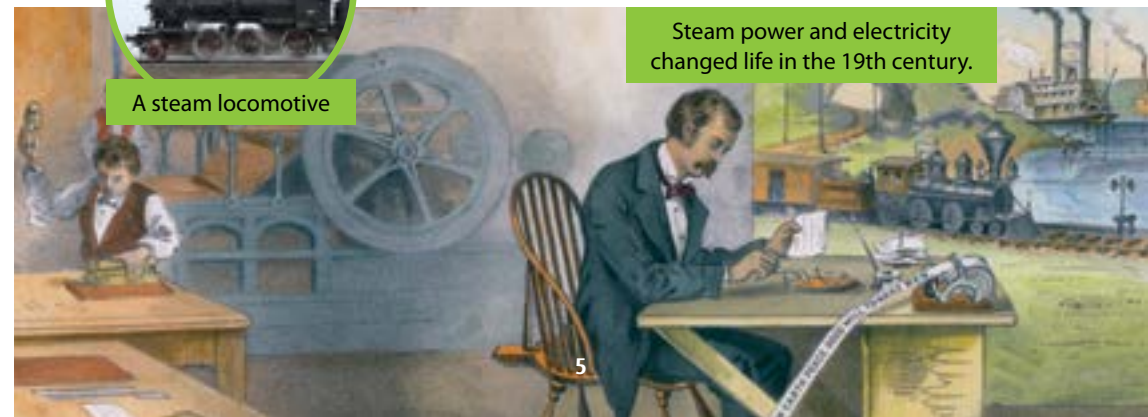


Men working with iron in a factory



A steam locomotive

Steam power and electricity changed life in the 19th century.



The History of Cars

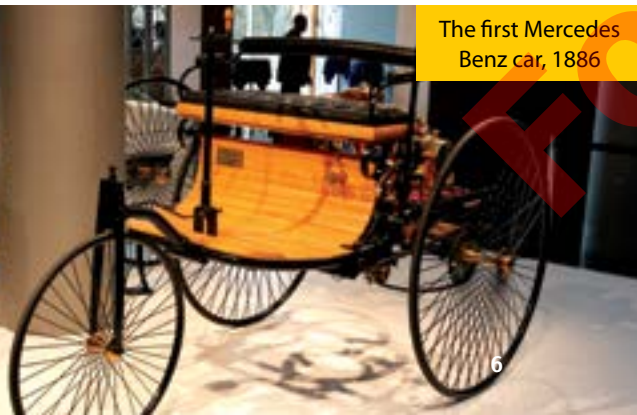
The first cars were called horseless carriages. They were powered by steam, but they were slow and could not go far. There were also some other ideas such as electric cars, but they were not successful.

By the end of the 19th century, an engine similar to what we use in cars today had been created. The German engineer, Karl Benz designed the first practical gasoline-powered car.

Gasoline-powered cars started to gain popularity around the start of the 20th century. However, they were very expensive. An American named Henry Ford wanted to make cars that everyone could buy. He invented a cheap and reliable car that he called the Model T.



A stamp of Karl Benz and his Mercedes Benz Victoris, 1893



The first Mercedes Benz car, 1886



A 1913 Ford Model T

The Cars We Drive These Days

Whether it is for luxury or safety, car manufacturers all over the world compete in their research to build better cars.

Most cars still use the same 100-year-old type of engine, but they now have better safety,

comfort, and fuel efficiency than the first

cars. These days, cars also come in many shapes, sizes, and colors.



Modern cars on a busy road with smog in the background

Today there is roughly one car for every ten people on the planet. This has raised many environmental concerns. Car pollution causes acid rain, smog, and lung

cancer, among other things. Pollution from cars impacts people and the environment.



A Mercedes Benz C, 2015

The interior of an antique luxury car versus that of a modern car



Cars in the Future

More and more countries are promoting the use of alternatives to the gasoline-powered car. There are many choices such as electric cars, solar cars, and hybrids. There are even cars that run on water or used cooking oil! Some countries, like Norway, are considering laws that allow only electric cars to be sold in the future.



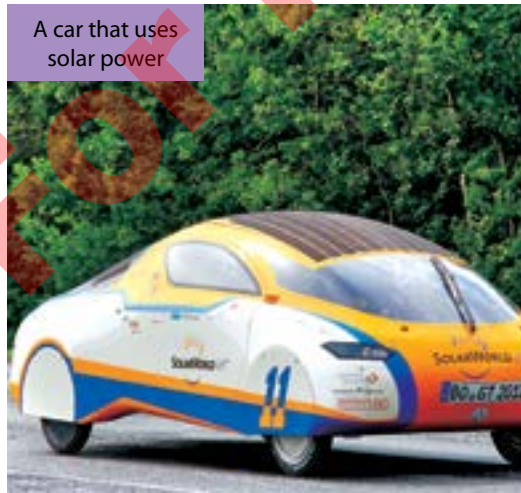
The interior of the prototype of a self-driven Mercedes Benz, 2016

It is also likely that cars in the future will drive themselves. Self-driven cars would be able to react faster than people can, and they would not get tired or distracted while driving. Self-driven vehicles would be safer!

An electric car at a charging station on the street



A car that uses solar power



The History of Airplanes

Humans have always dreamed of flying like birds. It was only in 1783, when the Montgolfier brothers invented the first hot air balloon that this dream became a reality. It took a century of further research before the first airplane was flown in 1903, once again by two brothers: the Wright Brothers.



The Montgolfier hot air balloon from 1783

For a long time, airplanes could not carry more than one or two people or cover long distances. During World War II, the development of airplanes made incredible progress. Bombers and big troop carriers led to the creation of the passenger and cargo planes that now transport people and goods around the world.



The Wright brothers and the first airplane

During the Cold War era, the space race led to new technologies such as the jet engine and lighter materials.



A World War II airplane

Comprehension Questions

1. Which of these things were changed by the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century?
 - (a) Vehicles
 - (b) Engines
 - (c) Ships and trains
 - (d) All of the above
2. The first cars were...
 - (a) called horseless carriages.
 - (b) solar-powered.
 - (c) cheap.
 - (d) able to travel far.
3. Modern electric cars are considered better because they...
 - (a) are better built.
 - (b) don't go too fast.
 - (c) don't pollute the atmosphere.
 - (d) can't crash.
4. What did World War II improve greatly?
 - (a) Ships
 - (b) Cars
 - (c) Planes
 - (d) Spacecraft
5. The planes of the future will most likely be...
 - (a) more expensive.
 - (b) able to fly out of the atmosphere.
 - (c) slower.
 - (d) less common than in our days.
6. What was invented for ships by the Chinese?
 - (a) The compass
 - (b) The sail
 - (c) The astrolabe
 - (d) The steam engine
7. Who was the first person in space?
 - (a) Karl Benz
 - (b) Jupiter Voyager
 - (c) Henry Ford
 - (d) Yuri Gagarin
8. In the future, ships may...
 - (a) only be found in museums.
 - (b) become more ecologically friendly.
 - (c) become islands.
 - (d) All of the above
9. The Hyperloop will be powered by...
 - (a) water.
 - (b) magnets.
 - (c) gasoline.
 - (d) All of the above
10. Teleportation...
 - (a) is impossible.
 - (b) is happening now.
 - (c) is possible in theory.
 - (d) is very slow.

Glossary

- **astrolabe** an instrument for determining your location using the sun and stars
- **compass** a magnetic instrument that shows you directions like north, south, east, or west
- **conquest** the act of taking control of a country, area, or situation
- **drone** any unmanned flying device that is guided remotely
- **ecological** concerning the relation of living beings to one another and to their environment
- **gasoline** a kind of fuel used by cars
- **leisure** the time when a person is not working or busy
- **maritime** concerning the seas and oceans
- **navigation** the act of finding your way using maps and instruments such as a compass
- **renewable** to be able to be replaced
- **solar** concerning the sun
- **spacecraft** a vehicle that goes into space
- **teleportation** the theoretical transfer of the atoms of an object to another location