Inventions Across Eras

Trace technological advances through time and place.

6-9.WH.1.6 "Identify the technological advances developed by Ancient, Middle Age, Early-Modern, and Modern societies and civilizations throughout the world."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the four named technologies. For each one, circle the era and draw a box around the place where it was developed.

Four Problems, Four Advances

1. Picture a farmer watching water reach a dry field. During ancient times, people in Mesopotamia developed irrigation canals that carried river water to crops. These channels helped farmers grow food even when rain was scarce. Many centuries later, during the Middle Ages, an inventor in China developed movable type made from individual characters. Printers could arrange the characters to form a page, then reuse them for another page. Both advances solved a practical problem, but one moved water while the other helped reproduce writing.

2. In the Early Modern era, lens makers in the Netherlands developed early compound microscopes. A compound microscope uses more than one lens to enlarge tiny objects. Its earliest images were not as sharp as those from later models, but the tool opened a new way to study the natural world. A scientist could examine details that were difficult to see with the naked eye. This advance did not move a resource across a landscape. Instead, it helped people gather information by making the very small easier to observe.

3. In the Modern era, researchers at Bell Labs in the United States developed the transistor in 1947. A transistor can control or boost an electrical signal. Transistors eventually made many electronic devices smaller and more reliable than devices that used older parts. This invention changed how people could build tools for communication and computing. Across these four eras, technology did not follow one path: people addressed needs in farming, printing, observation, and electronics. Identifying an advance means linking the invention to the society that developed it and the time when it appeared.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which advance did people in Mesopotamia develop during ancient times, and what did it carry?

2. Which advance was developed in China during the Middle Ages, and what could printers reuse?

3. Which advance was developed in the Netherlands in the Early Modern era, and what did it help people study?

4. Which advance was developed in the United States in the Modern era, and what does it control or boost?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose two advances from different eras in the passage. Write four sentences for a museum display: identify each advance with its era and place, then explain how the problems they helped solve were different.

ANSWER KEY

Inventions Across Eras

GRADES 6-9 · 6-9.WH.1.6

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the four named technologies. For each one, circle the era and draw a box around the place where it was developed. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which advance did people in Mesopotamia develop during ancient times, and what did it carry?	**Irrigation canals carried river water to crops.**
2	Which advance was developed in China during the Middle Ages, and what could printers reuse?	**Movable type let printers reuse individual characters.**
3	Which advance was developed in the Netherlands in the Early Modern era, and what did it help people study?	**Early compound microscopes helped people study tiny objects and details difficult to see with the naked eye.**
4	Which advance was developed in the United States in the Modern era, and what does it control or boost?	**The transistor controls or boosts an electrical signal.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During the Middle Ages, an inventor in China developed movable type. In the Modern era, researchers in the United States developed the transistor. Movable type helped printers reproduce written pages using characters they could rearrange. The transistor helped control electrical signals, so it addressed a different problem from reproducing text.

Accept accurate descriptions of each advance's use in the short answers. For the museum display, accept any two advances from different eras if both places and eras are correct and the response explains a meaningful difference in the problems they addressed.