

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

READING

Who Invented the Airplane?

Vocabulary Preview

- Match the words on the left with the meanings on the right.

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------|---|
| 1. throughout | <u>E</u> | A. to succeed in doing something |
| 2. soar | _____ | B. an idiom used to express a strong opinion |
| 3. achieve | _____ | C. unusually great intelligence |
| 4. without a doubt | _____ | D. a light aircraft that flies without an engine |
| 5. achievement | _____ | E. during the whole period of time |
| 6. experiment | _____ | F. something that someone has done successfully |
| 7. genius | _____ | G. to rise quickly and smoothly up into the air |
| 8. glider | _____ | H. a scientific test that is done to study what happens and to learn new things |

- Use the above words to complete the sentences. Change the forms of verbs and nouns when necessary.

1. Jenny has worked hard to achieve her goal.
2. I don't think people should do _____ on animals.
3. We saw a _____ flying over the beach last week.
4. There were many changes in the world _____ the last century.
5. I watched the rocket _____ into the air on its way to space.
6. The invention of the airplane was a great _____ for humankind.
7. The _____ of Albert Einstein resulted in many discoveries.
8. The movie was _____ the best film I have ever seen.

- Choose any two of the above words and write your own sentences.

1. _____

2. _____

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READING

Topic: Airports & Air Travel

Who Invented the Airplane?



Throughout¹ human history, people have dreamed of having the ability to fly like birds. It was not until about 500 years ago, however, that someone seriously began to study birds, and how they flew. This “someone” was Leonardo da Vinci. Humankind's dream, to **soar**² into the air, was finally **achieved**³ in 1783, when the Montgolfier brothers (of France) invented their hot-air balloon. For the first time ever, people could leave the ground to travel high up in the air. It was, **without a doubt**⁴, an amazing **achievement**⁵! Nevertheless, traveling in a hot-air balloon had its problems. First, balloons can only fly in good weather. Second, a hot-air balloon can only travel in the same direction as the wind. Third, a balloon can only carry a small number of people. Finally, after a balloon lands, it must be carried back to its starting point. Because of these problems, people **experimented**⁶ with other different kinds of flight for the next hundred years in both Europe and in the United States. People learned from these experiments, but in the end they all failed. Success, when it finally arrived, was born from the **genius**⁷ and hard work of two brothers from Dayton, Ohio in the United States: Wilbur Wright and Orville Wright. Using skills they had learned from their bicycle repair and sales shop, they began to make large kites, and in 1900 their kites were large enough to carry a single passenger. Then, in 1901, they flew their own **gliders**⁸, and afterwards they worked together with their bicycle shop mechanic to create a special engine for their “flying machine.” The engine had to be both very small (and light) and very powerful. In 1903, the *New York Times* newspaper said that it would take humans “from one million to ten million years” to invent airplanes. However, a few months later (on December 17, 1903) near the town of Kitty Hawk in North Carolina, Orville made the first ever powered airplane flight. Although the flight lasted for only 12 seconds and the distance traveled was only 120 feet (37 meters), the newspaper article was, of course, 100% wrong! In fact, since then, very small pieces of that same airplane have traveled to both the moon (in 1969), and to Mars (in 2021) where they flew on the *Ingenuity* helicopter!

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READING

Grammar Practice

Who Invented the Airplane?



Success, when it finally arrived, was born from the genius and (1)_____ work and of two brothers from Dayton, Ohio in the United States: Wilbur Wright and Orville Wright. Using skills they had (2)_____ from their bicycle repair and sales shop, they (3)_____ to make large kites, and in 1900 their kites (4)_____ large enough to carry a single passenger. Then, in 1901, they flew their own gliders, and afterwards they worked together with (5)_____ bicycle shop mechanic to create a special engine for (6)_____ “flying machine.” The engine had to be both very small (and light) and very (7)_____. In 1903, the *New York Times* newspaper said that it would take humans “from one million to ten million years” to invent airplanes. However, a few months later (on December 17, 1903) (8)_____ the town of Kitty Hawk in North Carolina, Orville made the first ever powered airplane flight. Although the flight lasted for only 12 seconds and the (9)_____ traveled was only 120 feet (37 meters), the newspaper article was, of course, 100% wrong! In fact, since (10)_____, very small pieces of that same airplane (11)_____ to both the moon (in 1969), and to Mars (in 2021) where they (12)_____ on the *Ingenuity* helicopter!

1.

- (A) hardly
- (B) hard
- (C) hardest

2.

- (A) learn
- (B) learned
- (C) learning

3.

- (A) begin
- (B) begun
- (C) began

4.

- (A) were
- (B) was
- (C) being

5.

- (A) their
- (B) there
- (C) they're

6.

- (A) there
- (B) they're
- (C) their

7.

- (A) power
- (B) powerful
- (C) powered

8.

- (A) nearly
- (B) nears
- (C) near

9.

- (A) distance
- (B) distant
- (C) distantly

10.

- (A) than
- (B) then
- (C) that

11.

- (A) are traveling
- (B) travel
- (C) have traveled

12.

- (A) flew
- (B) fly
- (C) flown

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Who Invented the Airplane?



How Much Do You Understand?

● **Complete the statements.**

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. People have wanted to | A. invented the hot-air balloon in 1783. |
| 2. The Montgolfier brothers | B. bicycle shop in Dayton, Ohio. |
| 3. There were several problems | C. are now on the moon and on Mars. |
| 4. The Wright brothers owned a | D. airplane flight on December 17, 1903. |
| 5. Orville Wright made the first | E. fly like birds for a very long time. |
| 6. Small pieces of the first airplane | F. with balloon travel. |

Discuss

● **Discuss the following questions with your classmates.**

1. What information in this story did you find the most interesting? Why?
2. How might life have been different before air travel was invented?
3. Would you like to learn how to fly a plane? Why? / Why not?
4. Imagine you are Orville Wright immediately after the first airplane flight. Describe what you saw and how you felt during the flight.

Write

● **The article mentions four problems with balloon travel. What three other possible problems can you think of?**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Title "Who Invented the Airplane?"

Grammar Focus Mixed: Past Simple, Present Perfect

Vocabulary 389 words

A1 words-61% / **A2** words-15% / **B1** words-6% / **B2** words-2% /
C1 words-1% / **C2** words-0% / **Off List**-10%

AWL Words in this text: *achieve, achievement, create, finally*

Vocabulary Analysis by: vocabkitchen.com

Level Intermediate to Upper Intermediate (CEFR B1 – B2)

ANSWER KEY Page 1

● Vocabulary

- | | |
|------|--------------------|
| 1. E | 1. achieve |
| 2. G | 2. experiments |
| 3. A | 3. glider |
| 4. B | 4. throughout |
| 5. F | 5. soar |
| 6. H | 6. achievement |
| 7. C | 7. genius |
| 8. D | 8. without a doubt |

ANSWER KEY Page 3

● Grammar

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. B | 7. B |
| 2. B | 8. C |
| 3. C | 9. A |
| 4. A | 10. B |
| 5. A | 11. C |
| 6. C | 12. A |

ANSWER KEY Page 4

● How Much Do You Understand?

1. People have wanted to (E) fly like birds for a very long time.
2. The Montgolfier brothers (A) invented the hot-air balloon in 1783.
3. There were several problems (F) with balloon travel.
4. The Wright brothers owned a (B) bicycle shop in Dayton, Ohio.
5. Orville Wright made the first (D) airplane flight on December 17, 1903.
6. Small pieces of the first airplane (C) are now on the moon and on Mars.

Article Sources

- *Montgolfier brothers*
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montgolfier_brothers
- *10 Things You May Not Know About the Wright Brothers*
<https://www.history.com/news/10-things-you-may-not-know-about-the-wright-brothers>
- *In 1903 New York Times predicted that airplanes would take 10 million years to develop*
<https://bigthink.com/pessimists-archive/air-space-flight-impossible/>
- *Wright brothers*
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wright_brothers