

The World of Tomorrow

What are some of the most recent inventions today?

1 “Grandpa, what is this?” Henry held a rolled-up poster in one hand. It was yellowed with age and seemed brittle.

2 Grandpa was putting price stickers on things that he wanted to sell in his yard sale. “I don’t know, Henry. Let’s unroll it and find out.”

3 Grandpa and Henry slowly unrolled the old poster. They placed it on the folding table in the yard and set a book on each corner to anchor it. The poster revealed a faded picture of a large sphere and something that looked like an enormous spike. Below the picture were the words *New York World’s Fair 1939–1940: Building the World of Tomorrow*. Grandpa smiled and gently smoothed the wrinkles in the poster.

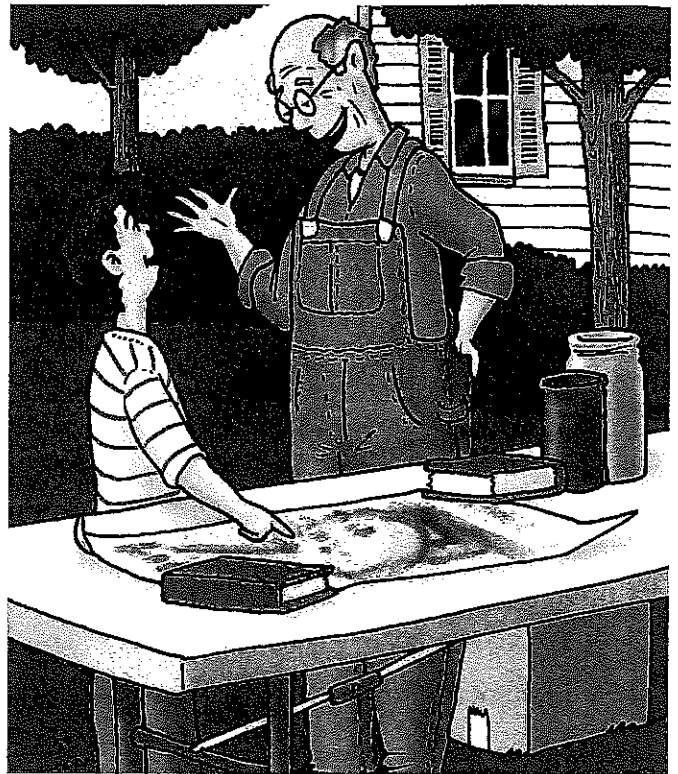
4 “Did you go to this fair?” Henry asked Grandpa. “Were you even born yet?”

5 Grandpa laughed. “It does seem like a long time ago,” he said. “I was just about your age when I went to the fair. It was one of the most memorable experiences of my life. My parents took me and my sister, Hillary,” remembered Grandpa. “It was right after the Great Depression. There was no money for extras for several years. Everything we owned was used over and over again until it fell apart.”

6 “What kind of a fair was it?” asked Henry. “The fairs I’ve gone to have rides and games and fair food, like elephants’ ears and caramel apples.”

7 “This fair had some of those things, too,” nodded Grandpa. “But mostly the 1939 World’s Fair was all about technology and things that were new. People in America wanted something to give them hope. They wanted to know that the world was changing for the better and that interesting things were coming their way.”

8 “What kind of technology?” asked Henry. “I know that things like computers and cell phones weren’t invented yet.”



9 “Those types of technology were far off in the future,” said Grandpa, “But I did get to see my first television there. It didn’t look much like the televisions of today, but I remember how amazed we all were to see a picture moving inside that small box.” Grandpa shook his head at the memory.

10 “What are those strange looking things?” asked Henry, gesturing to the poster.

11 “Those were the biggest attractions at the fair,” answered Grandpa. “The Trylon was a 700-foot-tall structure that was shaped like a steeple or a large spike. The Perisphere was a 200-foot-tall building shaped like a ball. Inside the Trylon, people could ride up the world’s largest escalator and make their way over to the Perisphere. Inside, I remember seeing a model of an incredible highway system where people could travel at speeds of 100 miles per hour.”

12 “Wow!” exclaimed Henry. “That doesn’t sound much like the fairs I’ve been to.”

13 Grandpa nodded. “I know. It was a once-in-a-lifetime kind of experience.”

Vocabulary Skills

Write the words from the story that have the meanings below.

1. easy to break

_____ Par. 1

2. to hold in place

_____ Par. 3

3. a solid geometric shape that looks like a globe

_____ Par. 3

4. the use of scientific knowledge to make new things

_____ Par. 7

5. pointing; motioning toward

_____ Par. 10

A **word family** is a group of words that have the same letter combinations. For example, the words *could*, *would*, and *should* are in the same word family because they all contain the *-ould* combination. Circle the words in each row that are part of the word family in parentheses.

6. (-ight) write delight tight tiger

7. (-ought) fought our brought broke

8. (-ight) night right rice sight

Fill in the blanks below with the possessive form of the word in parentheses.

9. _____ memories of the fair make good stories. (Grandpa)

10. Grandpa went to the _____ Fair in 1939. (World)

11. The _____ purpose was to advertise the fair. (poster)

12. Henry remembers eating pastries called _____ ears at a fair. (elephants)

Reading Skills

1. Number the events below from 1 to 5 to show the order in which they happened.

_____ Grandpa tells Henry that the fair was about technology and things that were new.

_____ Grandpa is pricing things to sell at a yard sale.

_____ Grandpa and Henry unroll the poster.

_____ Henry says the fair is not like the ones he has visited.

_____ Grandpa remembers seeing a television for the first time.

2. What major event in history did the 1939–40 World's Fair follow?

3. Why did Americans want something that could give them hope?

4. What were the biggest attractions at the fair?

5. Why do you think Grandpa says the fair was "a once-in-a-lifetime kind of experience"?

Circle the word that best completes each sentence, and write it on the line.

6. Grandpa _____ the 1939 World's Fair in New York.

forgot attended disliked

7. People wanted to see the _____ technology at the fair.

latest oldest strangest