

INVENTORS ARE...

Who is an inventor, anyway? Is an inventor just “a frazzled old man in a white coat with glasses and big hair?” Inventors are simply people – male or female, young or old – any race or creed - everyday people who solve problems. When someone brings a new solution to a problem, he or she is an inventor. Some solutions are simple. Some are complex. But all inventors have common traits:

- * Inventors are curious.
- * Inventors like to tinker with their ideas.
- * Inventors are persistent.
- * Inventors share their inventions.
- * Inventors are constantly inventing.



ORDINARY PEOPLE WITH EXTRAORDINARY IDEAS!

Band-Aid

At the turn of the century, Mrs. Earl Dickson, an inexperienced cook, often burned and cut herself. Mr. Dickson, a Johnson & Johnson employee, got plenty of practice in hand bandaging. Out of concern for his wife’s safety, he began to prepare bandages ahead of time so that his wife could apply them herself. By combining a piece of surgical tape and a piece of gauze, he fashioned the first crude adhesive strip bandage!

Life Savers Candy

During the hot summer of 1913, Clarence Crane, a chocolate candy manufacturer, found himself facing a dilemma. When he tried to ship his chocolates to candy shops in other cities, they melted into gooey blobs. To avoid dealing with the “mess”, his customers were deferring their orders until cooler weather. To retain his customers, Crane needed to find a substitute for the melted chocolates. He experimented with hard candy that wouldn’t melt during shipment. Using a machine designed for making medicine pills, Crane produced small, circular candies with a hole in the middle. This was the beginning of *Life Savers*!

Edible Pet Food Server

Suzanna Goodin was a six year-old girl with a problem. She had to feed her cat every day and wash the spoon she used. Suzanna did not like having to wash a dirty spoon. Suzanna went to her grandmother for help. Together they mixed up some dough and baked it in the shape of a spoon. It worked to scrape the food out of the can! Suzanna broke the spoon into pieces and added it to the food for her cat. Unfortunately, the cat didn’t like the biscuit. Suzanna added a “secret” ingredient she knew her cat liked. The

result was a spoon that would get the food out of the can, and could be enjoyed by her cat. Suzanna won a National Weekly Reader Invention Contest with her invention.

Through biographies and journals, you can learn about the process of inventing, as well as about individual inventors.

CHOOSE A FAMOUS INVENTOR

Research:

- * What did this person invent?
- * When did this person live?
- * What else was happening in the world during this inventor's life?
- * Give details about one selected invention.



Make:

- * A model of your selected invention.
- * A timeline listing major events during the inventor's lifetime.
- * A list of at least three sources from which you gathered information about the inventor, the inventions, and world events during the inventor's lifetime.

Present to the class:

- * Your model
- * Your timeline
- * Information about your inventor/invention

Hand in:

- * Model
- * Timeline
- * List of sources