

Useless machines



Inventors are all serious people? Inventions always need to be useful? I don't think so! This lesson is all about useless machines.

EXERCISE 1

Watch the video on useless machines. After that, discuss the following questions in class:

What is the main point of Simone's talk?

Why is it good to build useless machines ...

1.... for Simone personally?

2. ... in general?

EXERCISE 2

Simone talks about problems and solutions. As an inventor, she is interested in the things that people struggle with. She says: 'Identifying a problem is the first step in my process.' Read the following examples of everyday tasks. Try to come up with at least two problems that come with this task.

1. Cleaning your room

2. Walking the dog

DID YOU KNOW?

Most people think that inventors are genius scientists who know it all. But you don't have to be a scientist or an engineer to invent new things.

3. Taking a shower

4. Charging your phone

5. Eating lunch at school

6. Getting ready for school in the morning

EXERCISE 3

You are going to create your own useless machine! Follow the steps.

DID YOU KNOW?
Many inventions were accidental. The invention of the microwave oven, cornflakes, as well as the discovery of x-rays were all accidental.

Step 1

Choose one of the objects or activities from exercise 2.

Our object / activity is: _____

Step 2

Choose one of the problems that you mentioned in exercise 2.

The problem with this object / activity is that: _____

Step 3

Time to brainstorm! Come up with a machine that could help solve the problem. Remember: it is a useless machine, so it can be silly.

Step 4

Choose one of the following assignments:

- ☐ Draw a sketch of your machine.
- ☐ Write the text for a commercial. You can use this format:

FORMAT	EXAMPLE
Oh no! [describe problem]	Oh no! You are late for work again.
Do you ever think 'I wish [describe wish]'?	Do you ever think 'I wish my horse would go faster'?
We have got the perfect solution for you!	We have got the perfect solution for you.
[Say the name of your machine.]	The automatic horse!
[Explain why you need this machine.]	It is faster than a real horse, and you don't have to feed it.


Step 5

Present your useless machine with pride!
