



GREAT INVENTIONS

THE MIRROR



One Sunday afternoon, my cousins came over to my house to play. My mother always tells us not to play ball at home, but that day we disobeyed her. That was a bad idea because, at the most exciting moment of the football game, Miguelito kicked the ball and broke my mother's most precious mirror. What a mess! Pieces were everywhere. The worst part of all is that it was an antique, family heirloom that has been down through inheritance from parents to children. The mirror belonged to my great grandmother, Ramona, who had inherited it from her mother. How old was that mirror? Who had manufactured it? Who invented mirrors? Many questions were going through my mind when I remembered the book they had given me for my eleventh birthday. So, after picking up all the little pieces scattered on the floor, I went up to my room to find the book and started reading.



It is believed that the inhabitants of Anatolia, now Turkey, created the first mirrors 8000 years ago, from obsidian, a rock that they polished until they could see themselves in it.

Later, polished copper mirrors appeared in Egypt around 4000 B.C. In China and India, they were made of bronze around 2000 B.C. The inhabitants of Central and South America made mirrors from polished stone.



In 328 B.C., the Greeks founded a school to learn mirror craftsmanship. They taught students the delicate art of polishing with sand without scratching the reflecting metal surface.

In 1835, the German chemist, Justus von Liebig, developed the process by which modern mirrors are manufactured. Over time, this technique has improved, allowing the mass production of mirrors around the world.



In January 2007, a Chinese television program showed a 2500-year-old mirror, dating between the years 475 and 221 B.C. The little mirror was gold and silver, had eleven embedded turquoise stones in it, and was adorned with beautiful carvings. But it was lost to history when one of the program assistants accidentally dropped it, and the fragile mirror, worth a million dollars, broke into a thousand pieces.

Some people believe that if you break a mirror, you will have seven years of bad luck. Of course, that is merely a superstition; it doesn't happen. But in case you are one of those who believe it, some say that you have to keep the largest broken piece, let the next full moon reflect in it, and then look into it. Others say you should put the pieces in freshwater, which makes the evil eye and bad luck disappear. Good luck, friend!



Name _____

Date _____



THE MIRROR



Answer the questions.

1. Who created the first mirrors?
 - a. Murano people
 - b. Egyptians
 - c. the people of Anatolia
 - d. Greeks

2. How did Egyptians make mirrors?
 - a. with polished stone
 - b. with copper
 - c. with bronze
 - d. with silver

3. How did the Greeks polish metal mirrors?
 - a. with obsidian
 - b. with bronze oxide
 - c. with polishing stone
 - d. with sand

4. Metal mirrors got dull and dark when ____
 - a. they oxidized.
 - b. they didn't take care of them.
 - c. they got wet.
 - d. It does not say in the text.

5. Where was the first mirror invented?
 - a. in China
 - b. in Anatolia
 - c. in Murano
 - d. in Egypt

6. Where was Justus von Liebig from?
 - a. Anatolia
 - b. Germany
 - c. Greece
 - d. Turkey

7. How many turquoise stones were embedded in the Chinese mirror?
 - a. 221 stones
 - b. 475 stones
 - c. 11 stones
 - d. 7 stones

8. How many dollars was that old one worth Chinese mirror that broke?
 - a. 10,000
 - b. 100,000
 - c. 1,000,000
 - d. 10,000,000

9. Why are mirrors important?

10. Do you think it is bad luck to break a mirror? Explain your reason.

