

Young inventors

1 Look at the quote from inventor Thomas Edison. Discuss its meaning with your partner.

2a Read the article. Which young inventor has created a cheaper way to help others?

Genius is 1% inspiration, 99% perspiration.



YOUNG TEENAGE INVENTORS

Millions of new products are invented each year globally. In the USA alone, the patent office gave seven million patents to new inventions in a single year! Teenage inventors all over the world are busy thinking of brilliant new things to make life easier, safer or more fun. So, who are the best teenage inventors from your country? Who do you choose?

**KRISTIE,
USA**

I nominate Deepika Kurup. She's a young American scientist who invented a new water purification system when she was 14 years old. On a visit to India, she saw children drinking dirty water and this made her feel sad.

When she returned home, she started working immediately on a solution to the problem. She developed a low-cost method to clean water using solar power which can stop the bacteria that grows in waste water. It was a success, and in 2012 she won the Young Scientist Challenge Award for her invention. In 2015, she was also the National Geographic winner at the Google Science Fair. I really admire her and think the work she does is incredible for such a young person.



**BEDIR,
TURKEY**

When she was 16 years old, Elif Bilgin from Istanbul discovered an innovative new way to use banana peels. She created a new bio-plastic with them. How amazing is that? Elif wanted to invent a new type of plastic that causes less pollution than the traditional petroleum-based plastics. She worked for two years to design a new product that uses the skins of bananas because she realised the starch and cellulose in the banana peel creates plastic. Her environmentally-friendly bio-plastic won the 2013 Science in Action award, and if her discovery becomes really well-known she'll play a part in saving the planet.



In my city, we're all really proud of Kelvin Doe, the inventor with the most imagination in Freetown! He started inventing when he was four years old and he loves designing electronic solutions, especially for music, which is his passion. By the age of 13, Kelvin was already building radios, audio speakers and amplifiers from scrap metal and other materials he found in the rubbish. And he created his own youth radio station for Sierra Leone, where he plays music and broadcasts news under the name of DJ Focus. A few years ago, some of his creations were noticed by university professors in the USA and Kelvin had the chance to travel there and present his ideas at a festival for inventors in New York. He has even given talks to engineering students at Harvard University. He really is remarkable!

**KUMBA,
SIERRA
LEONE**



2b Read the article again and write *Deepika, Kelvin* or *Elif*.

- 1 An inventor from Africa.
.....
- 2 An award-winning inventor who has created a new material.
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- 3 An inventor who now helps future engineers.
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- 4 An award-winning inventor who was inspired by overseas travel.
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- 5 An inventor who travelled overseas to demonstrate some creations.
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- 6 An inventor and scientist with a strong focus on reducing pollution.
.....

2c Read the sentences and decide if they are True (T) or False (F).

- 1 Deepika started work on her invention following a trip to India. T / F
- 2 She has won prizes for her important discovery. T / F
- 3 Kelvin has created a number of environmentally-friendly products from rubbish. T / F
- 4 As well as being an inventor, he enjoys working with music. T / F
- 5 Elif uses different types of fruit to create new materials. T / F
- 6 Her discovery is an important scientific innovation for the environment. T / F

Gateway to culture

3a Work with a partner and discuss the questions.

- 1 Do you know anyone who has invented something? Have you ever invented or created something useful?
- 2 What do you think motivates someone to invent or create something new?

PROJECT

3b You are going to find out about a young inventor from your country and prepare a video message about him or her. Read the points and prepare your project research.

- 1 Work in pairs. Research a young inventor and find out interesting information about him or her. Consider:
 - what they have invented, discovered, designed or created
 - how they got the idea
 - how old they were at the time
 - what materials or equipment they used
 - any awards they may have won for their idea
 - any other important information.
- 2 Decide who is going to talk on the video message and who is going to record. Prepare the message from your notes, and include a reason why you have chosen this person to represent your country for the best teenage inventor.

3c In pairs, present your video message to the class. Your message should be around two minutes long. Have a class vote on the favourite invention.