

# Invention Timeline

## Using Inspiration to Construct Timelines

### OBJECTIVES

- Create a timeline of historical events
- Identify patterns of change
- Interpret data in a timeline

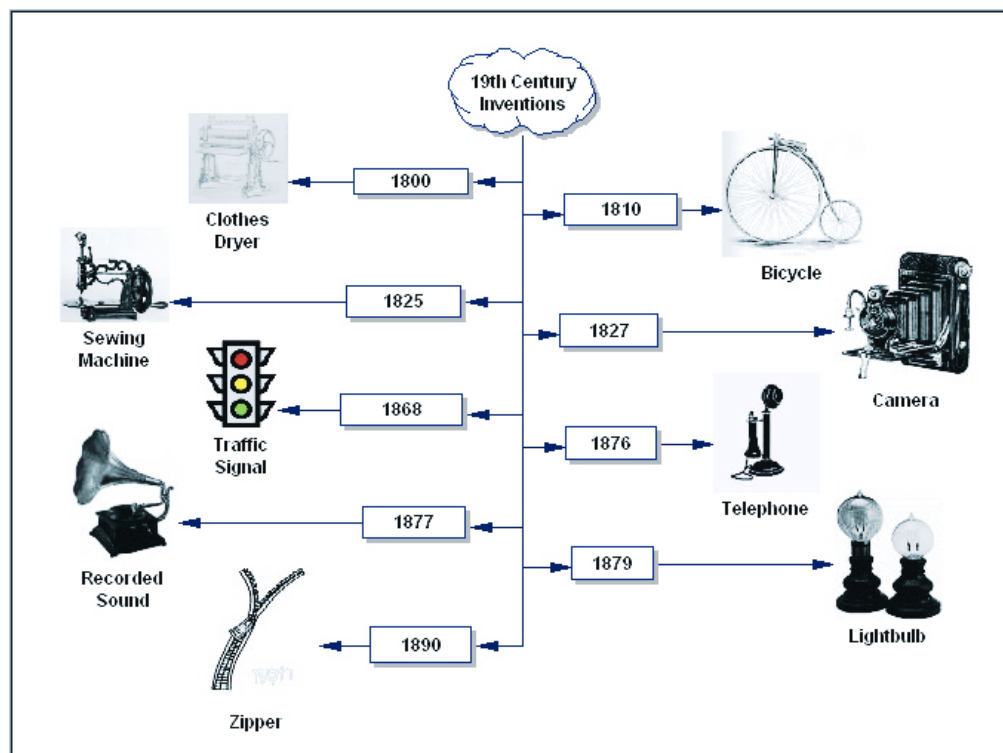
### MATERIALS

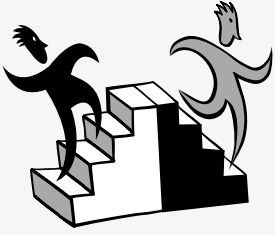
- Inspiration software
- Invention Timeline Planning Sheet
- Invention Timeline Template
- Invention Timeline Sample Activity

**Note:** Be sure to review the Invention Timeline Template and Sample Activity and make modifications to suit the needs of your students and situation.

*The best way for students to understand patterns of change and continuity in history is to construct timelines of significant historical developments. These timelines might appear in years, decades, centuries, or maybe as alternative systems of recording time such as Egyptian or solar calendars. Most importantly, however, timelines help students identify the sequence in which events develop and provide a basic illustration of chronological relationships.*

*In this lesson, students use Inspiration to view progress over time as they develop timelines highlighting inventions from different historical time periods.*





## Customizing to Meet Your Needs

- Younger students might like to create a timeline of the inventions of one inventor (for example, Thomas Edison).
- You can introduce the concept of timelines to younger students by creating broad categories of historical time including events that happened long ago, yesterday, today, and tomorrow.
- Older students might like to focus their research on inventions that relate to a field that interests them, such as movies and entertainment, medicine, or travel.
- Challenge older students to develop multi-tier timelines that compare social or political movements in history.

## Before the Computer

1. Discuss inventions with students. Describe the nature of inventions and ask students to name inventions. They may volunteer obvious inventions such as cars or light bulbs. Remind them that there are all sorts of inventions in our world including toothpaste, pottery, Band-Aids, shopping carts, and Jell-O.
2. Explain to students that timelines help us to identify patterns of change and continuity in the history of the community, nation, and world. Timelines also serve as a visual reminder of the lives of people of various cultures from times long ago until today. In the simplest form, timelines provide categories of historical time. Some distinguish between past, present, and future time. Others compare the social, economic, or political developments of a particular historical period.
3. Divide students into small groups and instruct the teams to agree on a historical period to research. Tell them they will research the inventions of that time period. Encourage teams to select diverse time periods in order to generate timelines from a variety of eras or centuries.
4. Distribute the Invention Timeline Planning Sheet. Instruct students to use library resources, Internet, or classroom references to research the inventions of that time in history and to provide a visual illustration and description of each invention listed on the timeline.

## At the Computer

1. Direct students to the Invention Timeline Template and tell them to rename and save the file in the appropriate location.
2. Next, instruct students to type in the title and historical period in the symbol labeled “Title.”  
  
Instruct students to use the Invention Timeline Planning Sheet as a guide in completing their Inspiration timelines.
4. Be sure that students add the date, invention title, short description, and graphic to each event on the timeline. Remind students that they can use the graphics from the Inspiration Symbol library or scan appropriate pictures from books or encyclopedias. They can also scan original drawings and import them into their timelines.
5. Tell students that they should print their completed timeline. Invite teams to share their timelines with the class.

## Other Great Activities

- Discuss the patterns of change with the students. Ask if they noticed any particular historical time periods of significant progress. Talk about how the lessons learned from one invention may inspire successive inventions.
- Launch a discussion on the nature of patents and the relationship with inventions. Research the patent process and highlight any changes in the patent process over the past century.
- Be creative with your timelines. Use the Invention Timeline Template to map the structure of events in a textbook chapter, to describe the history of the school, or even to develop picture timelines of their own lives or family history.

### Internet Connection

<http://www.cbc4kids.ca/general/the-lab/history-of-invention/default.html>

This web site features a timeline of inventions you can scroll through. Click any invention name to link to information about the history and results of that invention. This is the perfect starting point for this project.

[http://www.imahero.com/timelines/main\\_timeline.htm](http://www.imahero.com/timelines/main_timeline.htm)

Browse this site to view timelines of a variety of heroes in history.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/edison/>

Visit this PBS site and view the timeline of Edison's life.



### Tips & Timesavers

- Show students how to enter their data in **Outline** view and then switch to **Diagram** view for easy data entry.
- Students can create hyperlinks to each event description in order to make the timeline more interactive and less cluttered.