



We Were Wrong About the Future

Reading Worksheet — Level C | tahricteaches.com

People have always tried to guess what the future will look like. In the 1900s, people believed that by the year 2000, everyone would fly to work in **jetpacks** and live in giant cities in the sky. They drew pictures of silver buildings, flying cars, and robots doing every job. But almost none of these ideas came true. The future looked completely different from what anyone imagined.

Instead of flying cars, we got something nobody **predicted**: the internet. In 1950, almost nobody could imagine billions of people connected by invisible signals, sharing videos, photos, and ideas in seconds. Even smart scientists thought computers would always be huge machines that filled entire rooms — not tiny devices you carry in your pocket.

One famous example is the "picture phone." People in the 1960s guessed that we would all use special telephones that show your face while you talk. They were right about that part! But they imagined it as a large machine sitting in your home. They did not guess that a small phone in your pocket would do it — plus play music, give directions, and answer any question.

Now we face the same puzzle with **artificial intelligence**, or AI. AI programs can already write stories, create pictures, and solve hard problems. Some people say AI will take all our jobs. Others say it will cure diseases and make life better for everyone. The truth is, nobody really knows. History teaches us that the future almost never looks the way we imagine it will.



A. Vocabulary

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. predict ____ | a. something new created by a person for the first time |
| 2. technology ____ | b. to guess what will happen before it does |
| 3. connected ____ | c. tools and machines made using science to help people |
| 4. artificial intelligence ____ | d. joined or linked to other things or people |
| 5. invention ____ | e. computer systems that can do tasks that normally need human thinking |

B. True or False

- | | |
|--|--|
| ___ 1. In the 1900s, people predicted flying cars and cities in the sky. | ___ 2. The internet was widely predicted by scientists in 1950. |
| ___ 3. Early computers were small enough to fit in your pocket. | ___ 4. The "picture phone" idea from the 1960s let you see someone's face while talking. |
| ___ 5. Smartphones can give directions and answer questions. | ___ 6. AI programs can already write stories and create pictures. |
| ___ 7. We know exactly which jobs AI will replace in the future. | ___ 8. History shows that predictions about the future are often correct. |



C. Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: predict, technology, connected, artificial intelligence, invention

1. To _____ something means to guess what will happen before it does.
2. All the tools and machines made using science to help people are called _____.
3. By the internet, people all over the world became _____ to each other.
4. The telephone was an important _____ that changed how people communicate.
5. AI stands for _____ — computer systems that can think like humans.



D. Comprehension Questions

1. What is one thing people in the 1900s predicted for the future that did not come true?
2. What unexpected invention surprised the world in the second half of the 20th century?
3. How does the story of the "picture phone" show that predictions can be both right and wrong?

E. Discussion Questions

1. What do you think the world will look like in 50 years? What makes it hard to know for sure?
2. Do you think AI will make people's lives better, worse, or just different? Why?



Answer Key

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A. Vocabulary: 1-b, 2-c, 3-d, 4-e, 5-a

B. True/False: 1-T, 2-F, 3-F, 4-T, 5-T, 6-T, 7-F, 8-F

C. Fill Blanks: 1-predict, 2-technology, 3-connected, 4-invention, 5-artificial intelligence

D. Comprehension:

1. People predicted flying cars and giant cities in the sky that would exist by the year 2000.
2. The internet surprised the world — almost nobody in 1950 imagined billions of people sharing videos and ideas through invisible signals.
3. They correctly guessed that phones would show faces during calls, but they imagined a large home machine — not a small pocket device that also plays music and gives directions.

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