

## Task 1

Alexander Graham Bell – As a young boy, the telephone inventor Alexander Graham Bell liked mathematics, and science, but he was easily bored at school. He was much more interested in experimenting and discovering things on his own. One of his first inventions was a simple machine imitating the human voice. Alexander built it with his brother Melville when they were still children.

As a teenager, Bell wanted to become an actor or a sailor. Instead, he worked, like his father, as a speech therapist, and taught deaf people.

Bell's studies of the human ear and voice vibrations, and years of experiments resulted in 1876 in the first telephone conversation between Bell and his assistant Tomas Watson.

Alexander Bell's lifelong interest in nature and science also led to a variety of other invention ideas, including experiments with flight and designing aeroplanes.

Maria Mitchell – Maria Mitchell was one of the most famous American scientists of the 19th century. Born in 1818, in Massachusetts, Maria was the third child of a family with ten children. Her father was a dedicated astronomer and teacher, and he encouraged Maria's scientific interests.

In 1847, when she was looking at the sky through a telescope from the roof of her parents' house, she discovered a new comet. A year later she became the first woman admitted to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the first female professor of astronomy in the USA.

After her death, the Maria Mitchell Astronomical Society was created as tribute to her memory. The house where she was born was turned into a museum.

Jan Szczepanik – There was an inventor who is sometimes called the 'Polish Edison'. His name was Jan Szczepanik, and he was born in a poor uneducated family in a small village in the south of Poland.

During the 54 years of his life, Szczepanik got a few hundred patents and made over fifty inventions, many of which are still used today, especially in colour photography, film production and television. He also worked on a moving-wing aircraft, an airship and a submarine.

Szczepanik patented his inventions in Germany and England. The American novelist Mark Twain wrote two articles about his achievements, and the King of Spain gave him an order after a silk bullet-proof vest invented by the 'Polish Edison' saved his life.