Name: Date: Score: / 6

# Thomas Edison: Reading Comprehension

Nonfiction: History · about 210 words

Read the passage. Then answer each question. Circle the best answer or write your answer on the lines.

## 💡 Thomas Edison

Thomas Edison was one of the most famous inventors in American history. He was born in Ohio in 1847. As a boy, he asked so many questions that his teacher grew frustrated. His mother decided to teach him at home, where he read science books and did experiments in the basement.

As a teenager, Edison sold newspapers and snacks on trains. He also learned to use the telegraph, which sent messages over wires. His interest in electricity grew.

In 1876, Edison built a laboratory in Menlo Park, New Jersey. It was one of the first labs designed just for inventing. There, he and his team worked on many inventions. In 1877, Edison invented the phonograph, a machine that could record and play back sound. People were amazed to hear recorded voices for the first time.

Edison is also known for developing a long-lasting light bulb in 1879. Others had made electric lights before, but they burned out quickly. Edison and his team tested thousands of materials before finding one that worked. He also helped build power systems to bring electricity to homes.

Edison is often quoted as saying, "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." By the end of his life, he held more than 1,000 patents.

1. **Main idea:** What is this passage mostly about?

   A. how telegraphs work  B. the life and inventions of Thomas Edison  C. how to read science books  D. the history of New Jersey

2. **Detail:** Who taught Edison at home?

   A. his brother  B. his teacher  C. a scientist  D. his mother

3. **Detail:** What did the phonograph do?

   A. took pictures  B. sent messages over wires  C. made light  D. recorded and played back sound

4. **Detail:** What problem did earlier electric lights have?

   A. They were too bright.  B. They burned out quickly.  C. They were too cold.  D. They used water.

5. **Vocabulary:** A patent is...

   A. an official right to an invention  B. a newspaper  C. a type of light bulb  D. a laboratory

6. **Inference:** What does Edison's quote about 10,000 ways show about him?

ANSWER KEY

# Thomas Edison: Reading Comprehension (answers)

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6. **Inference:** What does Edison's quote about 10,000 ways show about him?
   **He kept trying and saw mistakes as part of learning.**