

The 1900 Challenge

ANSWER KEY

Test your knowledge of everyday life at the turn of the century

1. Which of the following was not available in 1900?

E. Cornflakes

Cornflakes were not invented until 1906. Dr. Pepper was developed in 1885 and Coca Cola the following year. The Cadbury brothers debuted solid chocolates in heart-shaped boxes in 1868. Bubble gum had its origins with tree sap, which everybody from the ancient Greeks to early American settlers enjoyed chewing. In 1869, Santa Anna introduced Thomas Adams to the sap of the saponilla tree, which was called "chicle." Adams invented a machine for manufacturing gum and in 1888 began selling Tutti-Frutti from vending machines. To learn more about the history of gum, visit <http://inventors.about.com/library/inventors/blqum.htm>)

2. What medical products were state-of-the-art at the turn of the century?

A. Rubber surgical gloves

C. Tonics such as Pal-Pinto Water

Tonics such as Pal-Pinto Water were very popular, if often ineffective. Dr. William Halsted pioneered the use of rubber surgical gloves in 1890. (Leeches were no longer used. Both wooden Q-tips and Band-Aid were invented in 1920.)

3. What was a common punishment for boys caught skinny-dipping at Galveston beach?

C. Policemen carried off their clothes.

Policemen would carry off the clothes of unlucky boys, who would have to go down to the police station to get them back. (I imagine a few boys got whippings, too.)

4. What toys were popular at Christmas time?

A. Roller skates

B. Wooden tops

E. Bicycles

Kids in 1900 were crazy about roller skates, wooden tops and bicycles. (Crayons were not invented until 1903, and Teddy Bears in 1902.)

5. Which Jello flavor was not available in 1900?

C. Cherry

While Jello was invented in 1845, manufacturers did not add fruit flavors until 1897. Cherry-flavored Jello came along in 1904.

6. What product was available in the summer of 1900?

C. The Brownie camera

Spiral-bound notebooks were developed in 1924, and crossword puzzles and zippers came along in 1913.

7. Who were the Houston "Mud Cats"?

B. A baseball team

The Mud Cats were a very popular baseball team.

8. Which amusement park ride was invented first?

A. The roller coaster

The first U.S. roller coaster opened at Coney Island, New York, in 1884. (The Ferris Wheel did not debut until the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.)

9. Which of these products was invented first?

D. Singer sewing machine

The Singer sewing machine was invented in 1851. (Barbed wire came along in 1873, toilet paper in 1880, and paper drinking straws in 1888.)