



GREAT INVENTIONS

THE TYPEWRITER



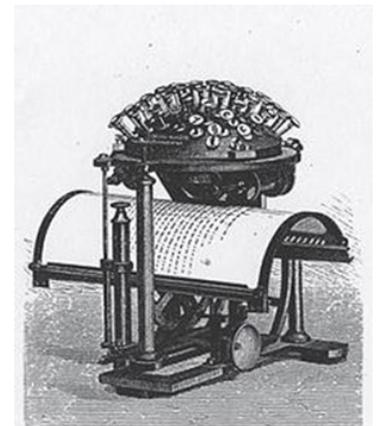
A few years ago, I went to a city newspaper museum where I saw an old typewriter up close. It was like the ones you see in movies sometimes. When I got home, I began researching typewriters.

Before the typewriter was invented, all documents had to be written by hand. The person who did that job was known as a clerk or secretary. A skilled typewriter operator was called a typist.

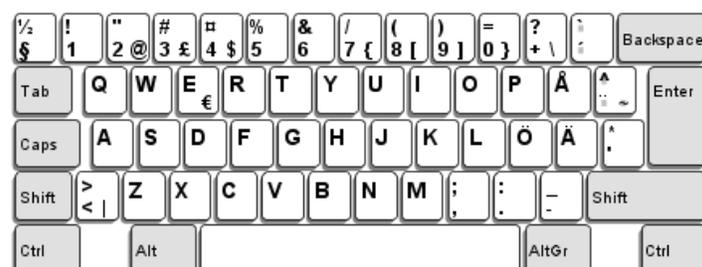
The first patent for what appears to be a typewriter was obtained by the English Henry Mill, on behalf of Queen Anne of Stuart in 1714. Later, other inventors also manufactured machines that were never sold.

In 1861, the Brazilian priest, Francisco João de Azevedo, made his typewriter in the design of the piano. That same year, Emperor Pedro I of Brazil awarded Azevedo a gold medal for that invention.

The first typewriter that was produced commercially was invented by Danish Reverend Rasmus Malling-Hansen in 1865; it was called The Writing Ball. Can you see why? You can see the machine in the picture on the right. This machine sold well in Europe and was used until 1909.



Have you ever wondered why the letters on the keyboard are laid out in that order?





The order of the keys is called QWERTY. It was designed and patented by the American, Christopher Sholes, in 1874. It was given that name because those are the first six letters on the keyboard layout he designed. Although computers have replaced typewriters, the QWERTY design is used in almost all computers in both English and Spanish.

Another much less used keyboard layout is called Dvorak, and it is the one used by the typist, Barbara Blackburn. She is considered the world's fastest typist. In 1985, representatives of the Guinness Book of the world records verified that she could maintain a speed of 150 words per minute for 50 minutes. That meant about 750 letters per minute. Her maximum speed was 212 words per minute, with a margin of error of only 0.2%.



During the 21st century, the last company in the world dedicated to the manufacturing typewriters was in India. This one closed in April 2011. It is difficult now to find newly manufactured typewriters.



Name _____

Date _____



THE TYPEWRITER

Answer the questions.



1. Where did I see a typewriter up close?
 - a. in my house
 - b. in a movie
 - c. in a museum
 - d. in a newspaper

2. A person who had skill using a typewriter was a _____.
 - a. notary
 - b. typist
 - c. secretary
 - d. clerk

3. What did Englishman Henry Mill get?
 - a. the hand of Ana Estuardo
 - b. the title of Notary
 - c. the first patent
 - d. a gold medal

4. Who awarded a medal?
 - a. Queen Anne
 - b. Pedro I
 - c. Azevedo I
 - d. Stuart I

5. Rasmus Malling-Hansen was a _____.
 - a. Reverend and inventor
 - b. Emperor and Reverend
 - c. inventor and typist
 - d. typist and Reverend

6. "The writing ball" was used until _____.
 - a. 1865
 - b. 1909
 - c. 1861
 - d. 1874

7. The layout of the letters on most keyboards is called _____.
 - a. Sholes
 - b. Dvorak
 - c. Guinness
 - d. QWERTY

8. The fastest typist of the world typed at a speed of _____.
 - a. 1985 letters per minute
 - b. 150 letters per minute
 - c. 750 letters per minute
 - d. 212 letters per minute

9. Where was the last factory for typewriters?
 - a. in Brazil
 - b. in Blackburn
 - c. in London
 - d. in India

10. What instrument or thing replaced typewriters?

