

Possible Responses and Points of Discussion for
Previewing the Website: The Great Idea Finder
(<http://www.idealfinder.com/history/index.html>)

1. How has the website designer organized the list of inventions?

There are actually three lists of inventions: Invention Facts & Myths, Innovation Timeline, and Invention Categories.

Have students click on each from the site index, then respond. Note that the site also has inventor biographies, organized alphabetically.

2. When would a user find the organization of information on the Invention Facts & Myths web page to be most helpful?

This section directs the user to the history of an individual invention without the user needing to know the inventor's name or the invention's date.

Discuss how successful information retrieval is, in part, due to the recognition of the choices the user has to navigate to and through Web-based materials. This website's designers have anticipated three different research paths and have provided clear navigation for each.

3. When would a user find the organization of the Innovation Timeline web page to be the most efficient way to locate information?

Researchers use the Innovation Timeline to locate information when the invention's place in the sequence of invention history is of key importance. Furthermore, a list of inventions in chronological order might be helpful to a researcher studying a particular period of time.

4. When would a user find an alphabetical list of inventors more helpful than a chronological organization of inventions?

When the inventor is the researcher's central concern, the Inventor Biography allows the user to quickly locate biographical information.

5. Why are some of the invention names in blue and underlined?

A blue underlined word is linked to additional related information. Linked invention names lead to information about the history of that device. Linked inventors names lead to biographical information.

Emphasize that links are key navigational elements. Also, point out and demonstrate the browser's navigation bar located at the top of the screen with the back and forward buttons to move through pages.

6. How can an invention be found quickly on the Innovation Timeline web page?

This web page is most appropriate when the purpose is to place an invention in historical sequence. If the time of the invention's appearance is known, students can select the correct century and then use the Edit→Find function to locate a specific invention.

Explain the Edit→Find feature in which the student requests that the computer scan the web page for a specific word or short phrase that he or she has typed into the Edit→Find dialog box. Remember, the word may occur more than once on a web page, requiring the use of the Find next button. An incorrect spelling or the absence of the word or phrase will return a response of none.