DID YOU KNOW?

1 Read the text quickly and answer this question.

How can a radio help to prevent AIDS in Africa?

a   It helps to cure the disease.

b   It helps to educate people about the disease.

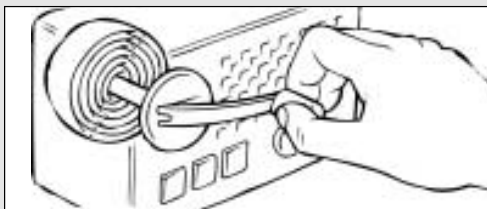c   It helps to spread electricity.

Trevor Bayliss and the wind-up radio

Trevor Bayliss invented the wind-up radio. He first thought of it when he was watching a television programme about children dying of AIDS in Africa. The figures were shocking: 11 million Africans were already dead because of AIDS, and 22 million were infected with the HIV virus. Bayliss knew that the most important way to stop AIDS from increasing was education. And he knew that the best way to educate large numbers of people in Africa was by radio. But many parts of Africa do not have electricity, and batteries are very expensive. So Bayliss began to think about alternatives. His idea was very simple: a wind-up radio. When you wind up the radio, you wind up a spring. When the spring is released, energy is also slowly released. If you wind the spring for 20 seconds, the radio will play for 40 minutes.

At first, no-one was interested in the wind-up radio, but then Bayliss's idea was shown on television in the UK in 1994. Soon after that, finance expert Christopher Staines and entrepreneur Rory Stear established a company called BayGen Power Industries in Cape Town, South Africa. The company employed disabled workers to manufacture the Freeplay® wind-up radio.

About 30,000 radios are produced every month and many are bought by humanitarian organizations such as the International Red Cross. They are distributed where they are needed. People in Africa can now listen to their radio and educate themselves and their families about AIDS. They can find out how to prevent it, and what medicines they can get.

2 Find the numbers to complete these sentences.

1   How many people in Africa were infected with HIV?   _____

2   How many people in Africa were dead because of AIDS?   _____

3   How long does the radio play after you wind it for 20 seconds?   _____

4   When was Bayliss's idea shown on television?   _____

**3 Can you think of any other important inventions that have helped other people?
What would *you* like to invent?**