



IDEAS IN THE SCRAP PILE

Skills

*Analysis,
research,
evaluation,
extrapolation*

Great inventors like Thomas Edison and Nikola Tesla have many ideas that could work, but for one reason or another just do not become successful products. Edison's concrete house is one example. Tesla's wireless lights are another.

In this exercise, you'll find a patent in the scrap pile of a great inventor that you think would make an excellent addition to our society. For a list of possible inventors, go to <http://patft.uspto.gov/netahtml/PTO/search-bool.html>.

To find patents from famous inventors, select years 1790 to present. Select Inventor Name for Field 1. Sometimes a search is tricky, depending on how old the patents are. You can try different name combinations until you get it right, or do a basic Internet research for your chosen inventor's more well-known inventions, find a patent number and look that up by going here: <http://patft.uspto.gov/netahtml/PTO/srchnum.htm>. Once you've got one patent by your inventor, you'll know the exact format of the name he/she is listed under in the patent database.

Good luck!

Some questions:

Inventor:	Patent No.
Patent Name:	Date:

Why did you choose this invention from your inventor's scrap pile? What about it makes it a good idea that is relevant today?

Any guesses why this particular invention did not "make it"?

Do you think society looks at the scrap pile of great inventors for ideas? Why or why not?





IDEAS IN THE SCRAP PILE

Do some research on your inventor:

How did he/she react to failure?

How do you react to failure?

Great inventors are not the only ones to have ideas that get put aside.

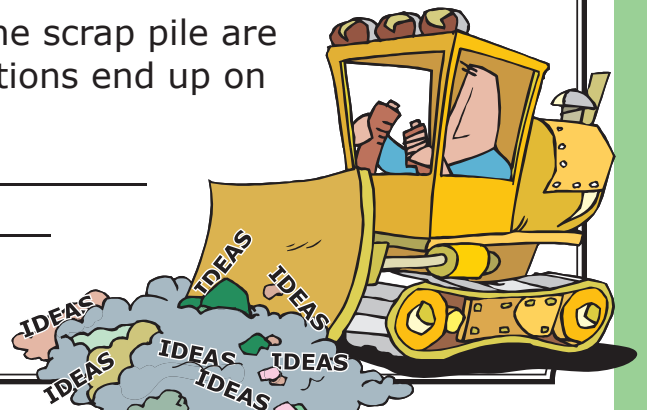
Use the following chart to track your ideas (not just inventions of course) over the week, and which ones you discard. At the end of the week, have another look – any ideas you forgot about or ignored that might be considered “good”?

Of the ideas you’ve listed, underline those ideas that you “kept” or acted upon.

Of the ideas you rejected, forgot, ignored, or put off, choose one you consider a “good idea”.

Why did it end up on the scrap pile?

Do you think the reasons for it ending up on the scrap pile are similar or dissimilar to the reasons good inventions end up on the scrap pile? Explain.





IDEAS IN THE SCRAP PILE

List your ideas in the columns below

Day	Ideas
Sunday	
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	