

Lesson 12

Directions: Read the following passage. Then answer questions 1 through 3.

The Story of Bicycles

What is better than pedaling your bike down the street on a beautiful day? People have been enjoying bike rides for hundreds of years.

The first bicycle was made in France in 1690. It didn't look anything like the sleek, speedy bikes we ride today. It was made up of two wheels connected by a bar. It had no handlebars and no pedals. The rider had to make this bicycle go by pushing his or her feet against the ground. About 126 years later, a German inventor added a handlebar to the front of his bicycle. The handlebar allowed him to turn the front wheel and control where the bicycle went. But he still had to push the bike along with his feet.

By 1839, bicycles started to look more like the ones we use today. Inventors in Scotland added pedals to help turn the wheels of the bicycle. Then a French inventor built a bicycle with a front wheel that was slightly larger than the back wheel. In 1873, an English inventor named James Starley made the front wheel three times as big as the back wheel. That style of bicycle is often pictured in encyclopedias.

Finally, in 1880, inventors made a safer bicycle that was closer to the ground. That was the bicycle that became popular in the United States.

Today's bicycles have come a long way from the early models. Racing or touring bikes are very light and allow the rider to move quickly. Mountain bikes have thick wheels and sturdy frames. These features help make the ride smoother on rocky ground.

Bikes have always had one thing in common. They have always given people a quick, enjoyable way to get from one place to another.

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Name _____

Lesson 12

Practice: Justifying and Checking Your Answer

Directions: Use “The Story of Bicycles” to answer the following questions.

1. What did Scottish inventors add to the bicycle to make it easier to use?

Explain

Write the sentence from the passage that justifies your answer.

2. The bicycle invented in 1880 was safer than earlier models because _____.

- A** it was closer to the ground
- B** it had brakes
- C** it had a rearview mirror
- D** its front wheel was larger than its back wheel

Explain

Write the sentence from the passage that justifies your answer.

3. Why do today’s mountain bikes ride smoothly on rocky ground?

Explain

Write the sentence from the passage that justifies your answer.



CHECK Can you justify each of your answers?

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