

AEROPLANES

Man's natural home is the land, but many thousands of years ago he learnt how to travel on the sea-in fact boats are older than anything built for land transport.

Travel on the sea was not a very difficult problem, * since wood, which can be found in most places near the sea, floats easily on water. But travel through the air was quite a different matter, since men knew of nothing which could at the same time float in the air and carry a man's weight. For centuries, therefore, flying remained only a dream. * In Ancient Greek times, there is the story of two men who escaped from an island by sticking wings made of feathers on to themselves with wax. (Unfortunately, we are told, one of them flew too near the sun, and the wax melted, so that he fell to his death in the sea.) Then we have the plans of Leonardo da Vinci, the Renaissance Italian artist and engineer, as a further example of Man's interest in flying. But it was not until rather recent times that the great dream became a fact.

First, man made use of the fact that hot air rises to make a light balloon carry people up a short distance above the ground. Then gases lighter than air were used in place of hot air, and in the 1870-71 war between France and Prussia a balloon was used by a Frenchman to fly out of Paris when the Prussians were all round it.

But balloons had the disadvantage of having to go wherever the wind blew them, so that one never knew where they would come down. It was not until the petrol engine was invented that this difficulty could be overcome. During the 1914-18 war, early aeroplanes, made of wood and canvas and armed with an ordinary machine-gun each, were used by both sides. Great progress was made in knowledge about flying as a result of the needs of the war, so that the years between 1918 and the beginning of the Second World War in 1939 saw an extraordinary development of aeroplanes, which increased greatly in size, strength, speed and safety.

For thousands of years man dreamt what seemed impossible dreams about flying; and then suddenly, in the short space of fifty years, aeroplanes were invented and developed into one of the most important means of transport* and instruments of war,

3. Answer the following questions using short-form answers wherever possible.

- ✓ (a) Why did one of the Greeks who were trying to fly fall into the sea?
- ✓ (b) Who was Leonardo da Vinci?
- ✓ (c) What was a balloon used for during the war between France and Prussia in 1870?
- ✓ (d) What were the early planes made of?

4. Give brief answers to the following questions using ONE COMPLETE sentence for each. Use your own words as far as possible, but your answer must be based only on the information in the piece.

- ✓ (a) Why was it not difficult for men to be able to travel on the sea?
- ✓ (b) Why was it hard to discover how to travel through the air?
- ✓ (c) What was the disadvantage of flying in a balloon?
- ✓ (d) What reasons does the author give for the extraordinary development of aeroplanes between 1918 and 1939?

Comprehension

Answer the following Questions
Using short-form answers
wherever possible.

(a)

Answer:

One of the Greeks fell into the sea due to the wax melted that was sticking with the wings.

(b)

Answer:

He was renaissance italian artist and engineer who had interest in flying.

(c)

Answer:

A ballon having gases lighter than the hot air was used during the war between France and Prussia in 1870.

(d)

Answer:


The early planes made up of wood and canvas and armed with an ordinary machine gun.



Give brief answers to the following questions using one complete sentence for each. Use your own words as far as possible, but your answer must be based only on the information in the piece.

(a)

Answer:

It was not difficult for men to be able to travel on the sea because wood can be found  in most of the places that can easily float on the water.

(b)

Answer:

It was hard to discover how to travel in the air because, men knew nothing which could float in the air and carry a man's weight.

(c)

Answer:

The disadvantage of flying in a balloon was that one never knew where they would come down.

(d)

Answer:

The reasons that were given by the author for extraordinary development;

- (i) Great progress made in the knowledge about flying.
 - (ii) It was also the need of the war.
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