The Invention of Television

An Amazing Fact a Day

The biggest TV currently available to buy in the UK measures 325 inches from corner to corner and you can watch 20 programmes at once on it!

You could try to find out:

- how much a giant screen TV would cost to buy;
- how big the first TV was;
- how the picture is made on a TV;
- what the most watched programme on TV ever was.

Read the text in the information below carefully.
Highlight any key information regarding the invention and inventors of television.

Television is a way of sending and receiving moving images and sounds over wires or through the air by electrical impulses. The big breakthrough in technology was the ability to send sound and pictures over the air. The word 'television' comes from the Greek prefix 'tele' and the Latin word 'vision' or 'seeing from a distance'. The TV camera converts images into electrical impulses which are sent along cables, or by radio waves, or satellite to a television receiver, where they are changed back into a picture.

As with most inventions, television's development depended upon previous inventions, and more than one individual contributed to the development of television as we know it today. People started experimenting with television during the 19th century. When you ask the question 'who invented television?' you may get a few different answers.

John Logie Baird, a Scottish amateur scientist, successfully transmitted the first TV picture in 1926, after years of work. Baird's system used a mechanical camera consisting of a large spinning disc with a spiral of holes that Paul Nipkow had developed in 1884. This old mechanical technology was quickly replaced by superior electronic television.

Philo Farnsworth successfully demonstrated electronic television in San Francisco in 1927. Farnsworth, at the age of fifteen, began imagining ways that electronic television could work. One day, while working in the fields among rows of vegetables, he was inspired. He realized that a picture could be dissected by a simple television camera into a series of lines of electricity. The lines would be transmitted so quickly that the eyes would merge the lines. Then, a cathode ray tube television receiver would change those lines back into a picture. Nobel laureate Ferdinand Braun invented the cathode ray tube, the basis of all modern television cameras and receivers. Initially, television was available only in black and white, even though experiments with colour began in the 1920s. You could not buy a colour television until 1953.

Create a timeline, showing the various inventions which took place in order for TV as we know it today to be developed.