

LESSON 8

Great Men and Women

Before You Read



Alfred Nobel Abu-Reihan Bironi Parvin E'tesami

People have always been interested in reading about great men and women. They want to know what makes such people famous. This lesson introduces two of them.

Answer the following questions.

1. Do you like to be famous? Why? / Why not?
2. Can you name the people in the following photos?
3. What do you know about them?
4. Why are they famous?
5. What makes people famous?
6. Can you name other famous people?

Now ask your partner the same questions.





Mother Teresa*

1 Mother Teresa was born in Skopje, Macedonia* on August 27, 1910. Her Albanian father had a small farm. At the age of twelve, when she was a student at a Roman Catholic elementary school, she knew she had a duty to help the poor. She decided to get training for **missionary work** and, a few years later, made India her choice. At the age of eighteen, she left home and joined an Irish **community** of **nuns** with a mission in Calcutta. After a few months' training in Dublin, she was sent to India and in 1928 she became a nun.

2 From 1929 to 1948 Mother Teresa taught at St. Mary's High School in Calcutta. The **suffering** and poverty she observed outside the **convent** walls made a deep impression on her. In 1946, she received permission from her superiors to leave the convent school and **devote** herself to working among the poor in the **slums** of Calcutta. Although she had no money, she started an open-air school for homeless children. Soon **voluntary** helpers joined her, and **financial** support came from various church organizations, as well as from the city officials. In 1950, she was permitted to start her own religious community "The Missionaries of **Charity**". Its task was to care for those persons nobody was prepared to look after.

3 Mother Teresa had fifty charity projects in India, including work among people living in slums, children's homes, and clinics. The community is still active and does charity work for the poorest of the poor in a number of countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe, and the United States.

4 Mother Teresa's work received a lot of attention all over the world, and she was given a number of awards including a Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, for her **promotion** of peace and brotherhood among the nations. Mother Teresa died on September 5, 1997.

missionary work:
teaching about the
Christian religion

community:
a group of people
having the same
religion, job, etc.

nun:
a woman of a
Christian
community

suffering:
experience of pain
and unpleasant
emotions

convent:
a building for nuns

devote:
give most of your
time, energy, etc.
to sb/sth

slum:
very poor part of
a city

voluntary:
done not by force

financial:
of money

charity:
help for the poor

promotion:
help sth to grow

* Skopje is the capital of Macedonia.

* adapted from: <http://www.nobel.se/peace/laureates/1979/teresa-bio.html>

Thomas Edison*

1 Thomas Alva Edison was one of the most important scientists and inventors of the past two centuries. His memory will **live on** because of the large number of his inventions and their usefulness even today. Most likely, the next electronic device you pick up he once invented or improved, or at least *tried to*.

2 Edison was born on February 11, 1847, in Milan, Ohio, and grew up in Michigan. At an early age, he showed **signs** of a serious hearing problem. This may have been the reason for Edison's poor performance at school. Edison did not do well there and was often annoyed by the other children. Three months after starting school, Edison ran away. His mother was forced to teach him at home.

3 Edison enjoyed reading chemistry books; besides, he was a very interested observer of anything that was **complex** — electronic, or telegraphic. He never stopped studying and experimenting.

4 In 1871 Edison moved to Newark, New Jersey and started his first laboratory. Later that year, he married Mary Stilwell, and they had three children. In 1876, when his lab in Newark got too small for his research activities, Edison decided to build a big factory in Menlo Park, New Jersey. This was the first **private** research laboratory in the U.S.

5 Edison worked on many projects, including sound recording devices. In 1877, he successfully recorded and played back a message by phonography. The phonography machine, or phonograph, was like a record player without the disc. Instead, it used a cylinder with **tin** foil to record and play sounds.

6 In 1879, Edison developed the first successful electric light bulb. This invention made Edison rich and famous. Edison worked until he was very old, although he suffered from many diseases. He died on October 18, 1931.

live on:
continue to live

sign:
sth that shows
what is happening

complex:
not simple

private:
not public

tin:
a kind of metal
(Sn)

* adapted from:

<http://www.myhero.com/myhero/hero.asp?hero=ta-edison>

After You Read

Comprehension Check

1 Check your understanding. Are these statements *True (T)* or *False (F)*? If they are not mentioned in the text, write *(N)*.

1. Mother Teresa got the idea to help the poor from her teachers.
2. She became a nun in Ireland.
3. Church organizations were asked to provide her with financial support to start a school for homeless children.
4. Even after Mother Teresa's death, her community is still helping the poor.
5. Mother Teresa got a prize in 1979 for helping the poor.
6. Thomas Edison was the most important scientist of the 20th century.
7. He ran away from school because his mother wanted to teach him at home.
8. Edison's research laboratory was not the first in the U.S.
9. Edison invented the first form of the record player.
10. The electric light bulb was Edison's last invention.

Compare your answers with a partner's.

2 A) *Mother Teresa started the "Missionaries of Charity" to*

- a) care for helpless people
- b) support church organizations
- c) bring voluntary helpers together
- d) collect money from the city officials

B) *From the last sentence in paragraph 1 about Edison we can understand that he*

- a) had a lot of inventions
- b) only invented electronic devices
- c) tried very hard to invent things
- d) invented things for today

C) Complete the following sentences about Mother Teresa and Thomas Edison.

Mother Teresa felt she had

Thomas Edison never

Compare your answers with a partner's.

3 Discuss the following questions in class.

1. What lessons do great men/women teach us?
2. How can people in the world help the poor?
3. Is it right to say that inventions make people famous? Why?/Why not?

Reading Skills

از دیگر مهارت‌های خواندن، به خصوص در خواندن زندگینامه‌ها، استخراج اطلاعات و تنظیم آن‌ها به صورت جدول زمانی است. تمرین زیر برای تقویت این مهارت است.

1 Find words or phrases from the two texts to complete the following outlines.

Mother Teresa		Thomas Edison	
1910	born in	1847	.....
1922	.....	1871	.....
1928	.....	1871	.....
1929	.....		Mary Stillwell
1946	left the convent and	1876	.....
	.....	1877	.....
1950	.....	1879	.....
1979	.....	1931	died at the age of 84
1997	.....	

Compare your answers with a partner's.

2 What do the following words from the text mean?

Word	Paragraph	Meaning
training	MT 1	
superior	MT 2	
official	MT 2	
impression	MT 2	
annoy	TE 2	

Compare your answers with a partner's.

Vocabulary Review

Complete the following sentences with one of the words from the reading passage. The first letter of each word has been given to you.

1. I asked the manager's p _____ to take a day off.
2. John's uncle s _____ from a strange disease.
3. Professor Smith has d _____ his life to scientific research.
4. He received a lot of t _____ before he started his job.
5. We're looking for new ways to improve the p _____ of our team.
6. After college, Tom is going to j _____ the police.
7. Mrs. Alavi is a very r _____ person; she reads the Holy Qur'an every day.
8. My brother gets very a _____ if you keep him waiting for a long time.

Compare your answers with a partner's.

Focus on Grammar

Expressing Possibility in the Past
 may/might + have + p.p.

1 Read the following dialogs carefully and answer the questions.

1. Sam: I wonder why Mother Teresa devoted all her life to the poor.
 Sarah: I have no idea but she **might have come** from a poor family herself.
2. Sam: Edison had signs of a serious hearing problem.
 Sarah: This **may have been** the reason for his poor performance at school.

Is Sarah sure of what she is saying? Why?

Expressing Deduction in the Past

must + have + p.p.

2 Read the following dialogs carefully and answer the questions.

1. Sam: Mother Teresa devoted her life to the poor.
Sarah: She **must have been** a very kind person.
2. Sam: Everyone knows that Edison developed the first successful electric light bulb, but did you know that he also worked on many other projects?
Sarah: Really? He **must have been** a very intelligent and hard-working person.

1. Is Sarah sure of what she is saying?
2. How did she come to this conclusion?

Expressing Advisability in the Past

should + have + p.p.

3 Read the following dialogs carefully and answer the questions.

1. Sam: Mother Teresa spent all her life helping the people of India.
Sarah: What she did was great. But people in Africa are much poorer and I believe she **should have helped** them instead.

1. Does Sarah think that Mother Teresa made the right choice?
2. What does she advise?

2. Sam: Edison's classmates at school were not kind to him. They often bothered him.

Sarah: That's so sad. They **should not have done** that.

1. Does Sarah think that Edison's classmates did the right thing?
2. What does she advise?

Grammar Practice

1 Fill in the blanks with *should*, *might* or *must*.

1. Maryam didn't help her mother with the dishes. I think she have helped her.

2. I rang the bell several times, but they didn't open the door. They.....
have gone out.
3. He hurt his back. He not have lifted that heavy box.
4. "He was very sad when I saw him".
"He have failed one of the exams, but still I'm not sure."

Compare your answers with a partner's.



Rewrite the following sentences using the modals in parentheses.

1. Perhaps she has forgotten that she has a class. (may)
.....
2. She didn't catch her train. I'm sure she left home too late. (must)
.....
3. You didn't e-mail me, but it would have been better to do so. (should)
.....
4. I can't find my keys. Perhaps I left them in my car. (might)
.....

Compare your answers with a partner's.

Grammar Digest

1. *May/might have + p.p.* shows possibility in the past. The degree of certainty is less than 50%.

- Tina was absent yesterday. She **may/might have been** sick.
- Babak went to bed early last night. He **may/might have been** too tired.
(In both examples the writer/speaker is not sure.)

2. *Must have + p.p.* shows our certainty about a past event. The degree of certainty is about 95%.

- Tina was absent yesterday. She **must have been** sick.
- Babak went to bed early last night. He **must have been** too tired.
(In both examples the writer/speaker is almost sure.)

3. *Should have + p.p.* shows advisability in the past, i.e. it would have been better to do/not to do something in the past.

- You **should have helped** the poor man. (But you didn't.)
- I **shouldn't have asked** him for help. (But I did.)