

1.31 How things are made: The Big Inventor's Quiz 1

Welcome to the Great Inventors Quiz.

This is today's mysterious Mr X.

He produced his masterpiece when he was 62.

You can see his work in films and advertising,

but also in the tourist sector.

What did he invent?

If you knew that, you'd also know his name.

Tip 1: Childhood.

Mr X was born in Germany some 150 years ago.

His rich parents lived on a fine country estate.

Mr X had 1 brother and 1 sister.

He and his siblings were taught at home, by a private tutor.

His family were aristocrats,

so when he was 16, he was sent to the military academy.

He was happy to go. He wanted to become a general.

Tip 2: Professional life.

Mr X did well in the army. He loved adventure and excitement.

When he was 25, he went to the American Civil War as an observer.

After that he went on an expedition to

find the source of the Mississippi.

He had his first flight in a balloon.

During the war these were used for observation.

Interesting, he thought,

but unfortunately too small
and difficult to steer.

This gave him an idea.

Tip 3: The invention.

When he was 35, Mr X married
Isabella.

A year later he fell off his horse.

He was sent to hospital.

This gave him time to develop his
idea:

an airship that could transport goods,
post and 20 passengers.

There already were airships,

but they were flimsy and couldn't be
steered.

He spent years developing his design.

Meanwhile, he had become a general
and the proud father of baby Helena.

When he was 52, he retired.

From then on he concentrated on his
dream.

He hired an engineer

and together they built a sturdy
and steerable airship.

Mr X was 62 when this zeppelin made its maiden voyage.

Yes, dear viewers, today's mystery man is Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin.

Count Zeppelin is meanwhile long dead.

Few zeppelins were built.

They were too susceptible to bad weather and fire.

Nowadays, they are being built again,

but smaller and filled with non-flammable gas.

They are used for advertising and for the monitoring of major events.

Thank you, Count von Zeppelin.