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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/497/2021_2022__E5_90_8D_E5_B8_88_E6_8C_87_E5_c84_497915.htm Unit one Elementary Schools in early America What accounts for the great outburst of major inventions in early America -- breakthroughs such as the telegraph, the steamboat and the weaving machine? Among the many shaping factors, I would single out the countrys excellent elementary schools. a labor force that welcomed the new technology. the practice of giving premiums to inventors. and above all the American genius for nonverbal, "spatial" thinking about things technological. Why mention the elementary schools? Because thanks to these schools our early mechanics, especially in the New England and Middle Atlantic states, were generally literate and at home in arithmetic and in some aspects of geometry and trigonometry. Acute foreign observers related american adaptiveness and inventiveness to this educational advantage. As a member of a British commission visiting here in 1853 reported, "With a mind prepared by thorough school discipline, the American boy develops rapidly into the skilled workman." A further stimulus to invention came from the "premium" system, which preceded our patent system and for years ran parallel with it. This approach, originated abroad, offered inventors medals, cash prizes and other incentives. In the United States, multitudes of premiums for new devices were awarded at country fairs and at the industrial fairs in major cities. Americans flocked to these fairs to admire the new machines and thus to renew

their faith in the beneficence of technological advance. Given this optimistic approach to technological innovation, the American worker took readily to that special kind of nonverbal thinking required in mechanical technology. As Eugene Ferguson has pointed out, "A technologist thinks about objects that cannot be reduced to unambiguous verbal descriptions. they are dealt with in his mind by a visual, nonverbal process. The designer and the inventor are able to assemble and manipulate in their minds devices that as yet do not exist." This nonverbal "spatial" thinking can be just as creative as painting and writing. robert fulton once wrote, "The mechanic should sit down among levers, screws, wedges, wheels, etc. , like a poet among the letters of the alphabet, considering them as an exhibition of his thoughts, in which a new arrangement transmits a new idea." When all these shaping forces -- schools, open attitudes, the premium system, a genius for spatial thinking -- interacted with one another on the rich U.S. mainland, they produced that american characteristic, emulation. Today that word implies mere imitation. But in earlier times it meant a friendly but competitive striving for fame and excellence.

invention n. 1.发明,发明物 2.捏造,虚构
inventor n.发明家,发明者[联想词]
inventory n.1.详细目录 2.存货清单
breakthrough n. 1.突围,突破 2.重大成就,惊人发现[联想词]
breakdown n. 1.垮台,破裂 2.衰竭,衰弱 3.损坏,故障 4.分类
premium n. 1.保险金 2.额外费用 3. 奖品,赠品,额外津贴 a. 1.高级的,优质的 2.售价高的[联想词]
subsidy n. 津贴,补贴
verbal a. 1.口头的 2.用言辞的,用文字的[联想词]
vocal a. 发声的,嗓音的
spatial a. 空间的,与空间有关的
literacy n.识字,有文化,读写能

力literate a. 1.有读写能力的 2.有文化修养的stimulus n. 1.促进 2.刺激[联想词]provocation n. 1.挑衅,挑拨 2.刺激,激怒provocative a. 1.挑衅的,煽动的 2.刺激的precede vt. 在...之前,先于precedent n. 1.先例,范例,判例 2.惯例patent n. 专利,专利权a. 专利(权)的,受专利保护的vt. 得到...的专利权originate vi. 起源于,来自,产生vt. 创造,创始,开创[联想词]commence v. 开始incentive n. 刺激,鼓励multitude n. 1.大量,许多 2.大众,民众ambiguous a. 引起歧义的,模式棱两可的,含糊不清的[联想词]indefinite a. 1.不明确的,含糊的 2.无限期的explicit a. 1.明确的,明晰的.详述的 2.直言的,毫不隐瞒的,露骨的manipulate vt. 1.操纵,控制,影响 2.操作,使用lever n. 1.杠杆 2.途径,工具,手段vt. 撬动,撬起wedge n. 楔(子) vt. 把...楔入,塞入[联想词]groove n. 沟,槽hinge n. 铰链interact vi. 相互作用,相互影响emulation n. 1.竞赛,竞争 2.仿效,仿真imitation n. 1.模仿 2.仿制,仿制品 3.贗品strive vi. 努力,奋斗,力求sculpture n. 1.雕刻,雕塑 2.雕刻作品,雕塑品[联想词]carve vt. 1.切,把...切碎 2.雕刻,刻engrave vt. 1.在...上雕刻 2.使铭记,使牢记statue n. 雕像,塑像bust n. 1.胸像,半身像 2.胸部,胸围marble n. 1.大理石 diploma n. 毕业文凭,毕业证书,资格证书[联想词]diplomat n. 1.外交官,外交家 2.有交际手段的人,圆滑的人perpetual a. 1.永久的,永恒的,长期的 2.无休止的,没完没了的

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