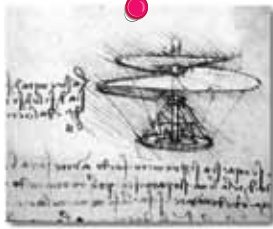


THE HELICOPTER



In the late 1400's, Leonardo Da Vinci sketched up a design called an "aerial screw," though it was never used.



Around 400 BC a bamboo toy in China was said to be the earliest form of the helicopter.



Gustave Ponton D'Amécourt constructed, in 1865, an aerial screw machine that worked by steam.



French inventor, Paul Cornu, was able to fly his Cornu helicopter without a tether, making his helicopter the first free flight with a pilot.



In 1907 French brothers, Jacque and Louis Breguet, created the Gyroplane, which they were able to hold two feet in the air for a minute.

The earliest vision of the helicopter may have been in ancient China around 400 BC, where children were known to have played with bamboo toys crafted with *rotary* wings to make them hover. However, no advancements were made on this idea of vertical flight until the late 1400s, when Leonardo Da Vinci drafted up a design for what he called an "aerial screw". This model was only *theoretical* and was never put to use. During the 1700s and 1800s, later models of rotor flight crafts included ones powered by springs, powered by rubber bands, and one that even used turkey feathers as rotor blades! Then, in 1861 the term "helicopter" was created by a French inventor named Gustave de Ponton d'Amécourt. His idea was to use steam to power his small model. However, it never actually took flight.

In the late 1800s the invention of the internal combustion engine paved way for many inventors, including Thomas Edison, to begin experimenting with a more practical model of the helicopter. Though many were unsuccessful, in 1907 French brothers, Jacque and Louis Breguet, created their Gyroplane, which they were able to lift nearly two feet in the air and hover for a minute. This is considered to be the first manned flight of a helicopter. In that same year, another French inventor, Paul Cornu, was able to fly his Cornu helicopter without a tether, making his helicopter the first free flight with a pilot. In May of 1924 another French inventor, Etienne Oehmichen, was able to fly his helicopter (which had four rotor blades) a distance of one kilometer, with a total

flight time of seven minutes and 40 seconds! As time went on, each new model of the helicopter added a contribution that helped the modern helicopter become what it is today.

VOCAB:

- Rotary- a machine operating by the rotation of some part
- Aerial- existing or happening in the air
- Theoretical- in theory; an idea that something MAY happen

COMPREHENSION:

(Write your answers on the back of this page)

Which inventors were the first to have a pilot fly their helicopter model?

Name three different techniques or technologies that inventors tried to use to fly their helicopter models.

How do you think the invention of the helicopter has benefited our society?

FUN FACT:

Did you know that one inventor who experimented with the helicopter, Igor Sikorsky, was inspired by a book by Jules Verne called "Clipper of the Clouds?"