





Talk About It

What's happening here?
Would *you* put your hand
on that shiny ball? Why?



Find out more about
electricity at

www.macmillanmh.com

Bright Ideas

Vocabulary

hilarious dizzy
convinced whirlwind
mischief nowadays
independence
(come in) handy



Dictionary

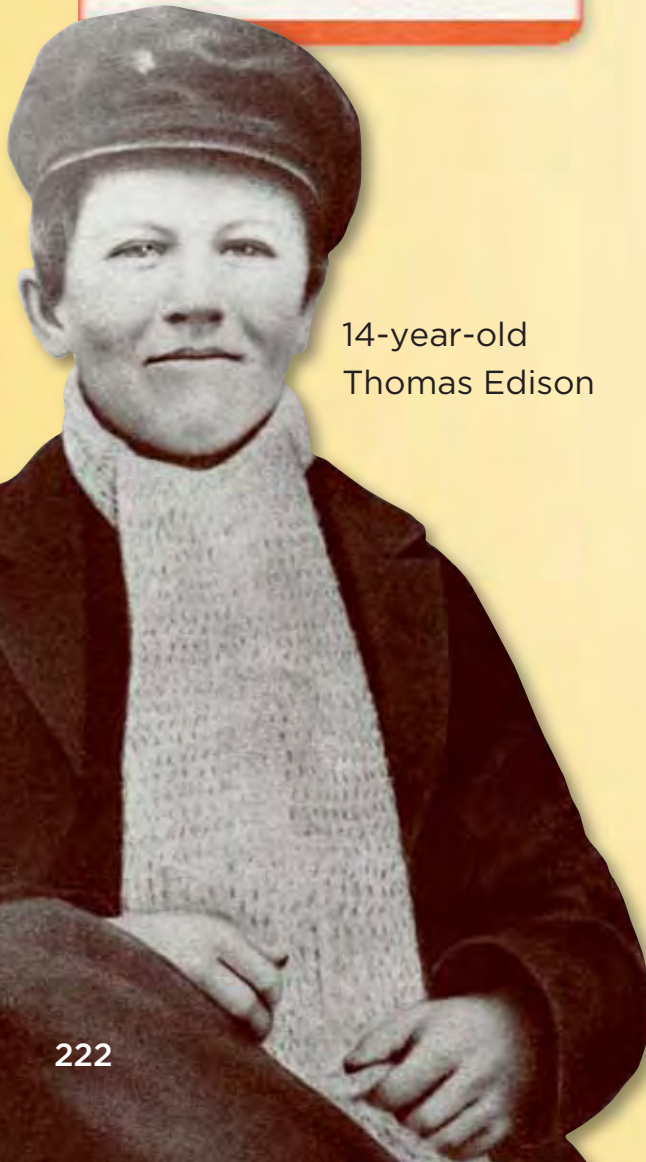
Idioms are phrases whose meaning differs from the meaning of each word.

come in handy = “be useful”

He Made the World Brighter



by Susan Dickson



14-year-old
Thomas Edison

Thomas Edison was a poor student. **Hilarious**? It *is* funny when you know how he turned out. Even if his grades didn't show it, the mother of this future inventor was **convinced** he was smart. After a few disappointing months in school, she decided to teach Thomas herself at home.

Thomas's Childhood

Thomas Alva Edison was born in 1847 in Ohio. Always curious and prone to **mischief**, Thomas read whenever he could.

Thomas's first job, at thirteen, was selling newspapers. Back then, that's when most boys started working. At sixteen he became a telegrapher. This gave Thomas **independence** and an opportunity to travel. Shortly after this, Edison decided to be an inventor.

The Young Inventor

Not everything Thomas invented was a success. In fact, his first invention, an electric vote recorder, failed. Edison thought it would **come in handy** for counting votes. No one else found it useful, but that didn't stop Edison.

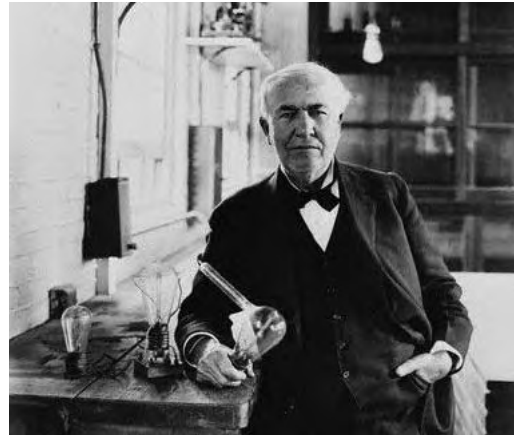
Edison's Greatest Challenge

Back then, gas was the best lighting source, but burning it was dirty and unhealthy. Gas could also be very dangerous. The idea of using electricity for lighting had been around for over 50 years. But nobody had developed anything practical or safe.

Edison set out to solve this problem. He improved upon what others had learned about electricity. He tested thousands of ideas in a **whirlwind** of activity. Several men helped Edison with his experiments.

By 1880, they had burned a light bulb for more than 1,500 hours. They must have felt **dizzy** with excitement!

This was just the beginning. Edison's success led to the invention of an entire electric lighting system. **Nowadays**, many appliances and lights run on electricity. It is hard to imagine life without it. So, next time you turn on your computer, think of Thomas Edison—and say “Thanks.”



Edison with lamps he created

Reread for Comprehension



Generate Questions

Problem and Solution Problems and solutions are important parts of most stories. Asking yourself questions as you read can help you understand problem and solution.

Reread the selection to find a problem and solution. Use a Problem and Solution Chart to help you.

