

Contents

1	Introduction	1
1.1	Ten Ages of Innovation	5
2	Measuring Creativity	9
3	Prehistory (>2700 BCE): Ancient Invention	13
3.1	The Wheel (c3500 BCE)	14
3.1.1	What Was Invented?	14
3.1.2	Why Was the Wheel Invented?	16
3.1.3	How Creative Was the Wheel?	17
3.2	Shoes (c3400 BCE)	18
3.2.1	What Was Invented?	19
3.2.2	Why Was the Shoe Invented?	20
3.2.3	How Creative Was the Shoe?	21
3.3	Soap (c2800 BCE)	23
3.3.1	What Was Invented?	23
3.3.2	Why Was Soap Invented?	25
3.3.3	How Creative Was Soap?	26
4	The Classical Period (753 BCE to 476 CE): Creative Civilisations	29
4.1	The Buckle (c700 BCE)	30
4.1.1	What Was Invented?	31
4.1.2	Why Was the Buckle Invented?	32
4.1.3	How Creative Was the Buckle?	32
4.2	The Antikythera Mechanism (c150 BCE)	34
4.2.1	What Was Invented?	35
4.2.2	Why Was the Antikythera Mechanism Invented?	37
4.2.3	How Creative Was the Antikythera Mechanism?	37

4.3	The Bain-Marie (0–300 CE)	39
4.3.1	What Was Invented?	40
4.3.2	Why Was the Bain-Marie Invented?	42
4.3.3	How Creative Was the Bain-Marie?	42
5	The Dark Ages (476–1453 CE): Medieval Creativity	45
5.1	The Quill Pen (c580 CE)	46
5.1.1	What Was Invented?	47
5.1.2	Why Was the Quill Pen Invented?	48
5.1.3	How Creative Was the Quill Pen?	49
5.2	Lingua Ignota (c1200)	50
5.2.1	What Was Invented?	51
5.2.2	Why Was Lingua Ignota Invented?	52
5.2.3	How Creative Was Lingua Ignota?	53
5.3	The Verge Escapement (c1300)	55
5.3.1	What Was Invented?	56
5.3.2	Why Was the Verge Escapement Invented?	57
5.3.3	How Creative Was the Verge Escapement?	58
6	The Renaissance (1300–1700): Reawakening Creativity	61
6.1	Feminism (1405)	62
6.1.1	What Was Invented?	63
6.1.2	Why Was Feminism Invented?	64
6.1.3	How Creative Was Feminism?	64
6.2	The Toothbrush (c1498)	66
6.2.1	What Was Invented?	66
6.2.2	Why Was the Toothbrush Invented?	68
6.2.3	How Creative Was the Toothbrush?	68
6.3	Palliative Medicine (c1570)	69
6.3.1	What Was Invented?	70
6.3.2	Why Was Palliative Medicine Invented?	72
6.3.3	How Creative Was Palliative Medicine?	72
7	The Age of Exploration (1490–1700): New Worlds and New Problems	75
7.1	Astronomical Tables (1650)	76
7.1.1	What Was Invented?	76
7.1.2	Why Were Astronomical Tables Invented?	79
7.1.3	How Creative Were Astronomical Tables?	79
7.2	The Two-Handed Internal Rotation (1690)	80
7.2.1	What Was Invented?	81
7.2.2	Why Was the Two-Handed Internal Rotation Invented?	82
7.2.3	How Creative Was the Two-Handed Internal Rotation?	83

7.3	The Corn Mill (1715)	85
7.3.1	What Was Invented?	85
7.3.2	Why Was the Corn Mill Invented?	86
7.3.3	How Creative was the Corn Mill?	88
8	The Age of Enlightenment (1685–1815): Commercialising Innovation	91
8.1	Silk Design (1740s)	92
8.1.1	What Was Invented?	92
8.1.2	Why Was Silk Design Invented?	94
8.1.3	How Creative Was Silk Design?	94
8.2	Coade Stone (1770)	96
8.2.1	What Was Invented?	97
8.2.2	Why Was Coade Stone Invented?	98
8.2.3	How Creative Was Coade Stone?	99
8.3	Straw Weaving (1809)	100
8.3.1	What Was Invented?	101
8.3.2	Why Was Straw Weaving Invented?	102
8.3.3	How Creative Was Straw Weaving?	103
9	The Romantic Period (1800–1900): Industrial Innovation	105
9.1	The Berkeley Horse (1828)	106
9.1.1	What Was Invented?	106
9.1.2	Why Was the Berkeley Horse Invented?	108
9.1.3	How Creative Was the Berkeley Horse?	108
9.2	The Computer Program (1840s)	110
9.2.1	What Was Invented?	110
9.2.2	Why Was the Computer Program Invented?	112
9.2.3	How Creative Was the Computer Program?	113
9.3	The Propeller (1869)	115
9.3.1	What Was Invented?	116
9.3.2	Why Was the Propeller Invented?	118
9.3.3	How Creative Was the Propeller?	118
9.4	The Life Raft (1880)	120
9.4.1	What Was Invented?	120
9.4.2	Why Was the Life Raft Invented?	121
9.4.3	How Creative Was the Life Raft?	121
10	The Modern Age (1880–1950): Bras, Bombs, and Bits	125
10.1	The Brassiere (1914)	126
10.1.1	What Was Invented?	127
10.1.2	Why Was the Brassiere Invented?	129
10.1.3	How Creative Was the Brassiere?	129
10.2	The Radio-Controlled Torpedo (1942)	131
10.2.1	What Was Invented?	131

10.2.2	Why Was the Radio-Controlled Torpedo Invented? . . .	133
10.2.3	How Creative Was the Radio-Controlled Torpedo? . . .	133
10.3	The Compiler (1952)	135
10.3.1	What Was Invented?	136
10.3.2	Why Was the Compiler Invented?	137
10.3.3	How Creative Was the Compiler?	138
11	The Space Age (1950–1981): The Rise of the Modern Creativity Era	141
11.1	Waterproof Diaper (c1949)	142
11.1.1	What Was Invented?	142
11.1.2	Why Was the Waterproof Diaper Invented?	145
11.1.3	How Creative Is the Waterproof Diaper?	145
11.2	Kevlar (1964)	147
11.2.1	What Was Invented?	147
11.2.2	Why Was Kevlar Invented?	149
11.2.3	How Creative Was Kevlar?	150
11.3	Scotchgard (1973)	151
11.3.1	What Was Invented?	152
11.3.2	Why Was Scotchgard Invented?	153
11.3.3	How Creative Was Scotchgard?	154
12	The Digital Age (1981–Present): Complexity and Creativity	157
12.1	The Laserphaco Probe (1981)	158
12.1.1	What Was Invented?	158
12.1.2	Why Was the Laserphaco Probe Invented?	159
12.1.3	How Creative Was the Laserphaco Probe?	161
12.2	Blissymbol Printer (1984)	162
12.2.1	What Was Invented?	163
12.2.2	Why Was the Blissymbol Printer Invented?	164
12.2.3	How Creative Was the Blissymbol Printer?	165
12.3	The Thermoelectric Flashlight (2013)	167
12.3.1	What Was Invented?	167
12.3.2	Why Was the Thermoelectric Flashlight Invented?	168
12.3.3	How Creative Was the Thermoelectric Flashlight?	169
13	The Innovation Scoreboard	173
	Appendix A: The Creative Solution Diagnosis Scale (CSDS)	181
	Appendix B: Tables of Creativity Scores	185
	Bibliography	189