Eureka! 我成功了！

Vocabulary: scientific discoveries 词汇: 科学发现

Are you **absent-minded**? Sometimes I wish I were. So many things were **achieved** by people who just left something in their pocket or forgot to switch off a machine.

Like what happened to this group of Swedish scientists. According to the British newspaper The Independent, they left their equipment switched on over the weekend by accident and ended up creating a **synthetic** form of the world's most **absorbent** material.

Observation is at the core of science

Their **experiments** to create what they now call Upsalite were not going well till the **cock-up** happened. Johan Gomez de la Torre, researcher at the Uppsala University, said: "A Thursday afternoon in 2011… by mistake (we) left the material in the reaction chamber. Back at work on Monday morning we discovered that a rigid gel had formed and after drying this gel we started to get excited."

The **breakthrough** has far-reaching **commercial applications**, including cleaning up huge oil spills.

It might also have been **by chance** that the US engineer William Percy had a bar of chocolate in his pocket when he visited a factory which produced equipment for radars. It was during the Second World War. Percy was **intrigued** when the sweet melted and he decided to **investigate**.

The scientist observed the effect the equipment had on popcorn and other foods and invented another machine with similar technology. It was the **precursor** to the microwaves we see today.

But we can't talk about accidental **breakthroughs** in science without mentioning the Scottish bacteriologist Alexander Fleming, who discovered **penicillin**, the first **antibiotic**, in 1928. Fleming came back to his laboratory after a holiday and observed a strange **phenomenon** in a dish used to grow **microbes**. He noticed a bacteria free circle around a growth of mould and realised that the mould was acting as an antibiotic killing the bacteria around it.

Maybe being **absent-minded** isn't a problem as long as you have the curiosity of a scientist. Get used to observing your surroundings. Who knows where it might lead?

词汇表请参看答案与词汇部分

Quiz 测验

阅读短文并回答问题。

1. What happened to the group of Swedish scientists?
2. Where was William Percy when his bar of chocolate melted?
3. Who is Alexander Fleming?
4. Why were there no bacteria around the mould?
5. What word is used in the article to refer to something which was not created by nature?

Exercise 练习

请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。从每个表格中选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. The police were suspicious when they saw the shop's window was broken and got into the building to _____.

experiment	investigate	switch off	discover

2. When I grow up I want to study microbes. I want to be _____.

an engineer	absent minded	a bacteriologist	a precursor

3. The first digital computers were _____ in the mid-twentieth century.

discovered	formed	noticed	invented

4. Mary lost the game _____. She knew her younger brother would be pleased if he won it.

by chance	at work	on purpose	by accident

5. The postman delivered the books I bought online to the house across the road. What _____!

a cock-up	an experiment	an accident	a phenomenon

<u>Answers and Glossary 答案与词汇</u>

Quiz 小测验

1. What happened to the group of Swedish scientists? **They forgot to switch off their equipment when they left for the weekend.**
2. Where was William Percy when his bar of chocolate melted? **He was visiting a factory which produced radars.**
3. Who is Alexander Fleming? **The Scottish bacteriologist who discovered the first antibiotic.**
4. Why were there no bacteria around the mould? **Because something in the mould had killed the bacteria.**
5. What word is used in the article to refer to something which was not created by nature? **Synthetic**.

Exercise 练习

1. The police were suspicious when they saw the shop's window broken and got into the building to **investigate**.

2. When I grow up I want to study microbes. I want to be **a bacteriologist**.

3. The first digital computers were **invented** in the mid-twentieth century.

4. Mary lost the game **on purpose**. She knew her younger brother would be pleased if he won it.

5. The postman delivered the books I bought online to the house across the road. What **a cock-up**!

Glossary 词汇表

absent-minded	心不在焉的
to achieve	取得（成就）
synthetic	合成的，人造的
absorbent	吸水的
an experiment	一个试验
a cock-up	一个差错
a breakthrough	一个突破
commercial application	商业应用
by chance	偶然地，无意之中
intrigued	引起兴趣的，被迷住了
to investigate	（动词）调查
a precursor	前身
penicillin	盘尼西林（青霉素）
an antibiotic	一种抗生素
a phenomenon	一种现象
a microbe	一种微生物