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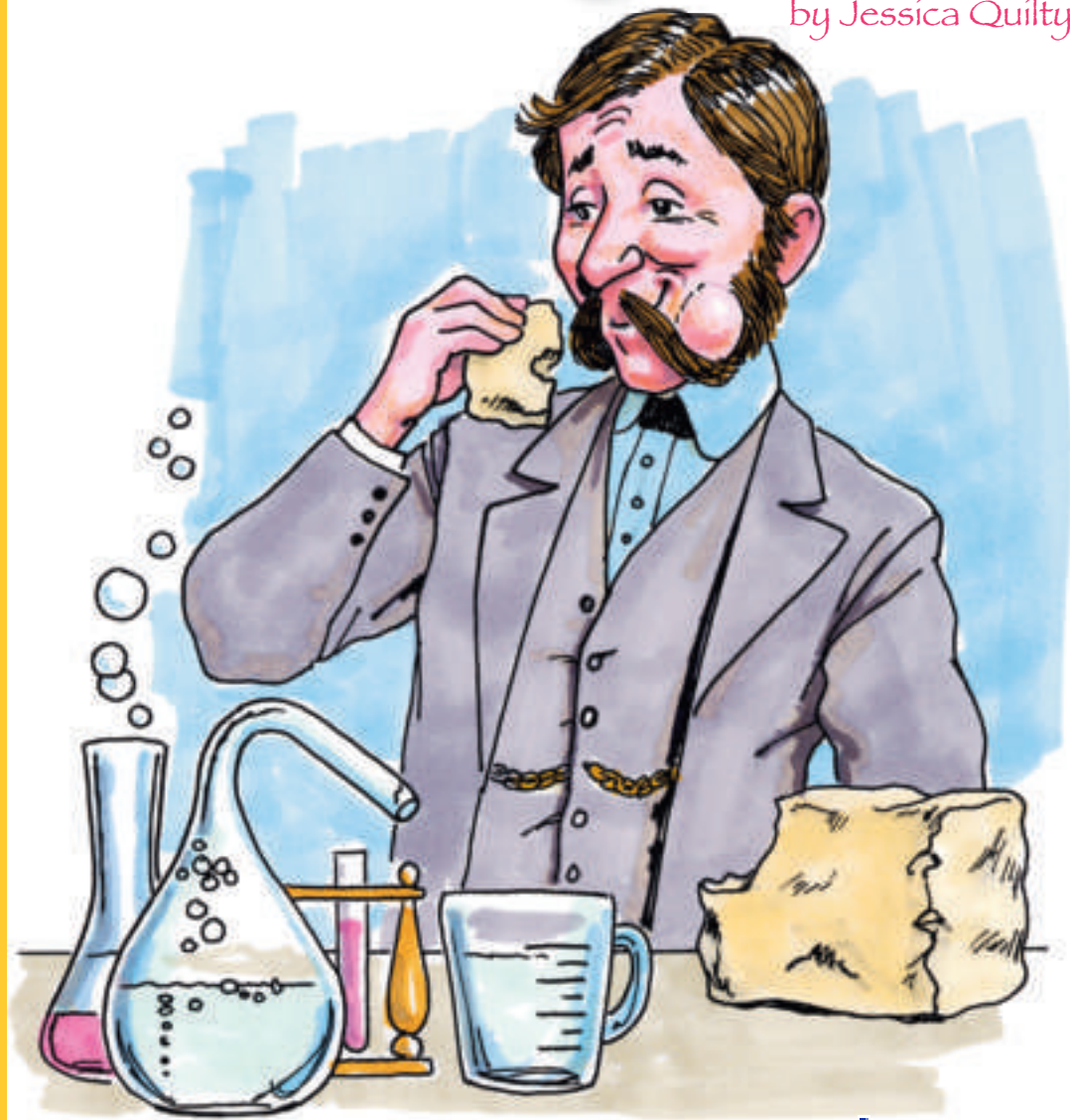
Social Studies

Social Studies

Biography

Thomas Adams Invents Chewing Gum

by Jessica Quilty



illustrated by Ralph Canaday

Genre

Biography

Comprehension Skills and Strategy

- Cause and Effect
- Draw Conclusions
- Monitor and Fix Up

Text Features

- Captions
- Illustrations
- Time Line

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Thomas Adams Invents Chewing Gum



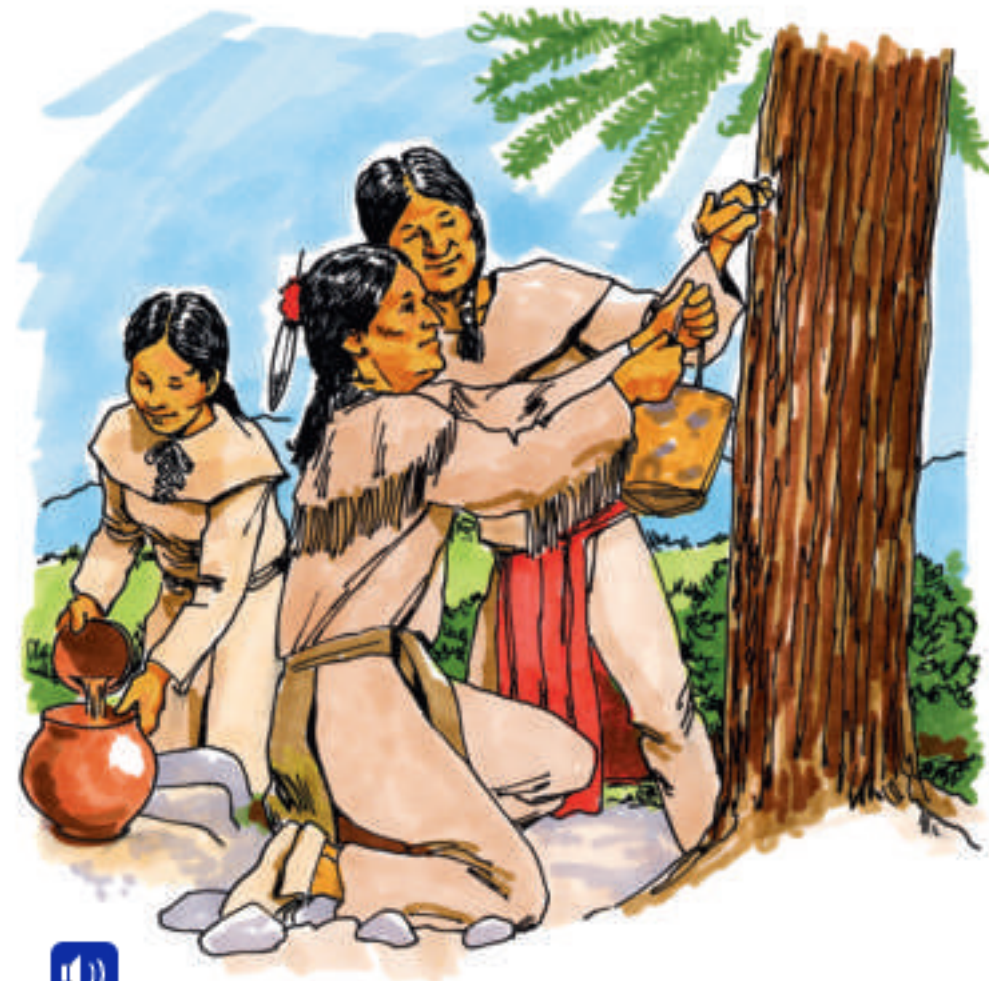
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Have you ever wondered about chewing gum? Gum has a long history. Long ago, Native Americans made gum from tree sap. Later, gum was made from wax. Thomas Adams invented the kind of gum we chew today.



Spruce tree sap was once used to make chewing gum.

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Thomas Adams was born in New York in 1818. He was an inventor. Adams invented a new way to feed horses. He invented a new way to light lamps. His best invention was a new way to make chewing gum. Where did his gum idea come from?



Adams met a man named Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. Santa Anna taught Adams about chicle, the rubbery sap of a tree that grows in Mexico. Santa Anna thought that Adams could mix chicle with rubber to make cheaper buggy tires.



Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, the ex-president of Mexico, taught Adams about chicle.



Adams liked Santa Anna's idea. He bought one ton of chicle from Mexico. He shipped it by boat from Mexico to his home in New York.



Chicle comes from sapodilla trees that grow in Mexico. It is a lot like rubber.



Adams worked for hours every day. His clothes got dirty. He wanted to sell the chicle tires and make a lot of money.

The idea for tires did not work because chicle melted in the heat. Adams was sad. He felt like throwing the chicle in the river.

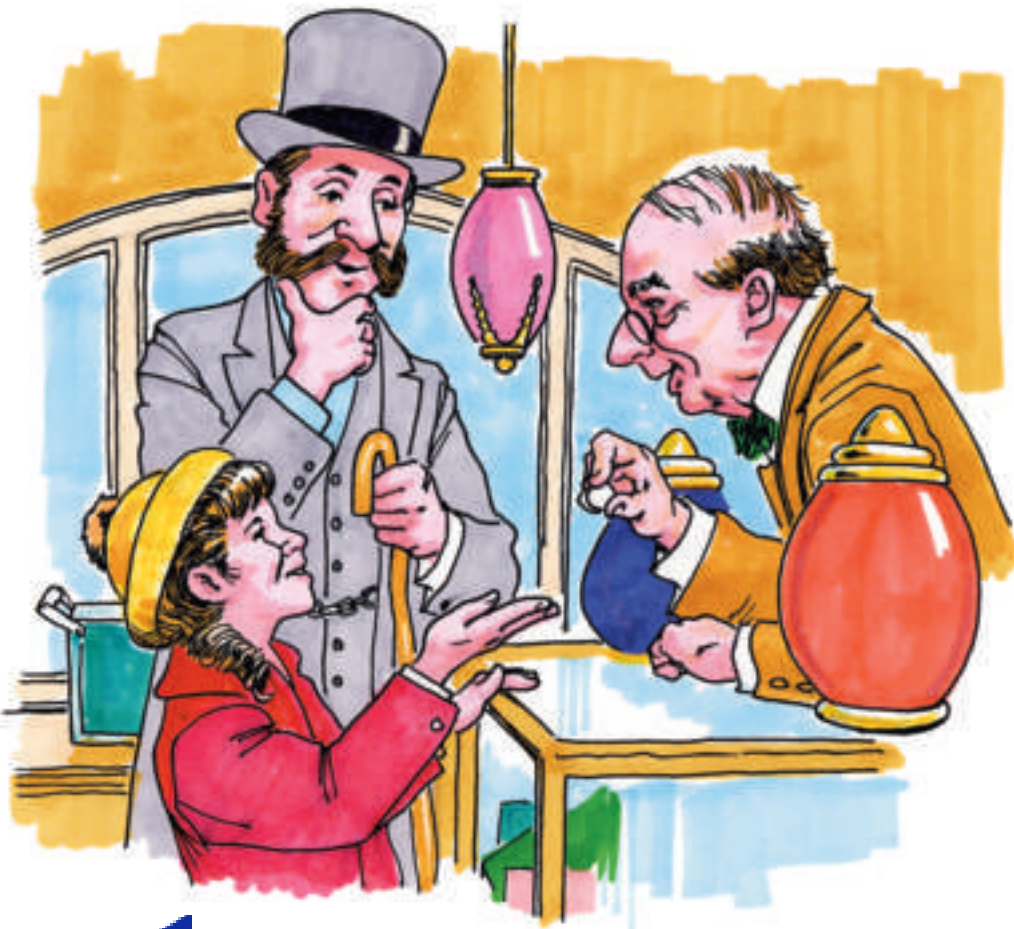




Later, Adams went to the drugstore. Adams's neighbor, a little girl, was buying wax gum. Adams got a new idea. He asked the storeowner a question.

"Would you sell a new kind of chewing gum?" Adams asked.

"Nothing would make me happier," the storeowner said.



Adams had been chewing chicle as he worked on the tires. It was much better than wax gum. Adams made the chicle into small sticks that he could wrap and sell. He sold his chicle gum at drugstores.



Adams knew that people in Mexico chewed chicle.



Adams invented a machine to make his gum. He started with only one kind of gum. He named his gum *Adams' New York Gum No. 1*. Next, he made flavored gums. He made a licorice gum and a fruit gum.



Machines such as this one were used to make Adams' gum in the early 1900s.



Adams invented a machine to sell his gum. Then he started a company called Adams and Sons. He traveled across the United States to sell his gum. He sold a lot of gum, so he made a lot of money.



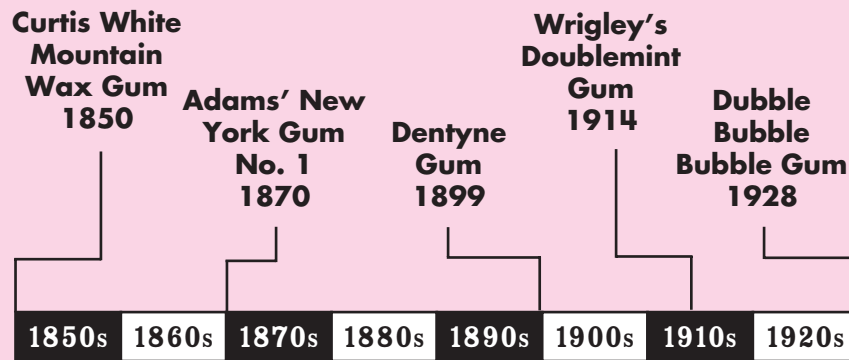


Thomas Adams stopped working when he was 81 years old. His sons took over Adams and Sons.

Today we have many kinds of chewing gum to choose from, but it all started with Thomas Adams and one little girl buying wax gum. You never know where you might find the idea for a great invention.



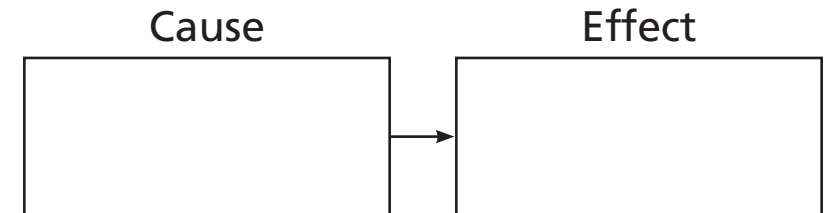
GUM TIME LINE



Think and Share

Read Together

1. Thomas Adams was sad and felt like throwing his chicle in the river. What was the cause of this? Use a chart like the one below to show the relationship between cause and effect.



2. What information in the caption on page 5 might help you understand why Santa Anna would know about trees in Mexico?
3. On page 8, we read that Adams saw a neighbor at the drugstore. How does this help us guess that Adams was near his home?
4. Look at the time line on page 12. Before Adams' invention, there was only wax gum. What happened after Adams' New York Gum No. 1 was made?

