Tech World

TIME FOR KIDS

20th Century INVENTIONS



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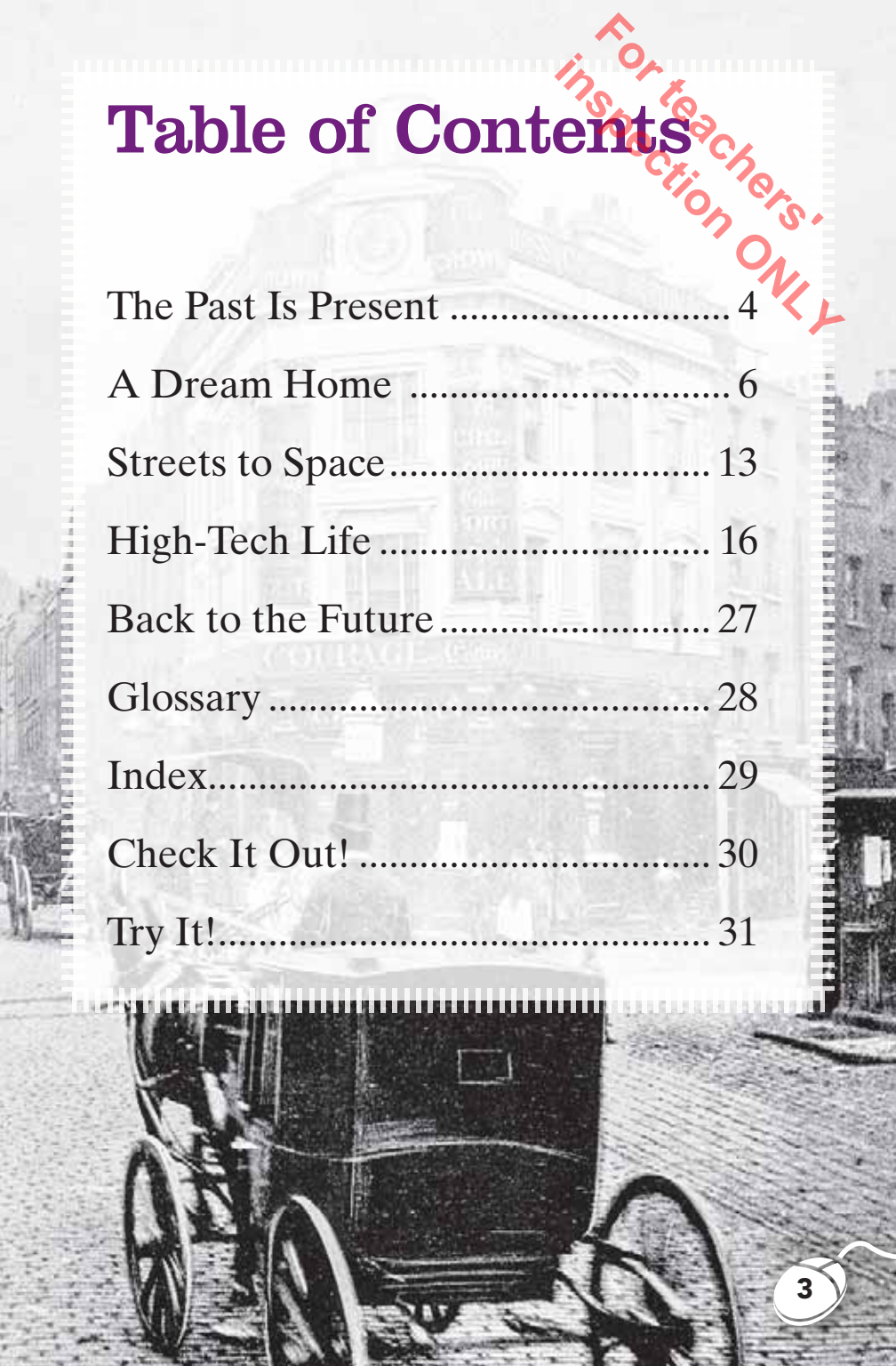
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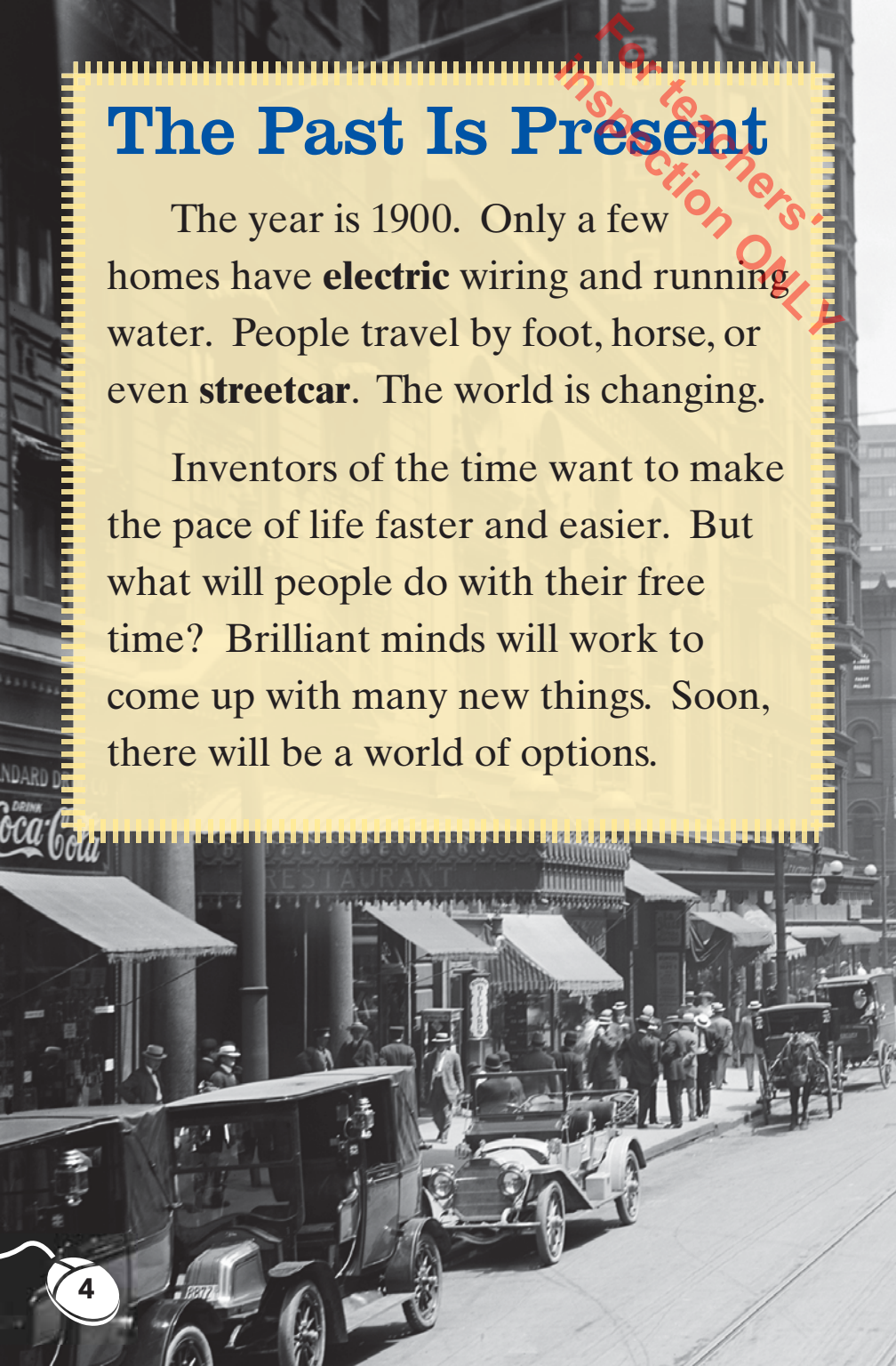
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The Past Is Present

The year is 1900. Only a few homes have **electric** wiring and running water. People travel by foot, horse, or even **streetcar**. The world is changing.

Inventors of the time want to make the pace of life faster and easier. But what will people do with their free time? Brilliant minds will work to come up with many new things. Soon, there will be a world of options.



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20th Century U.S. Transportation

Amount of	1900	1999
horses	22 million	5 million
train tracks	193,000 miles	144,500 miles
streetcar tracks	16,645 miles	191 miles
cars	8,000	208 million
paved roads	144	4 million



horse-drawn carriage in the early 20th century

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A Dream Home

Modern homes would seem like a fantasy to a person from the early 20th century. We use many amazing devices today! We watch TVs. We email and shop using computers. Machines wash our dishes and clothes.

Cooking is not the chore it used to be. Making bread used to take eight hours. Now, we have sliced bread and toasters. We buy premade foods. We heat meals in microwave ovens.



Early microwaves were huge! This one is from the 1950s.

Time line of Household Inventions

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1900

1902
air conditioner, flashlight



1903
coat hanger

1907
paper towels

1908
domestic vacuum

1910

1911
electric washing machine

1913
refrigerator



1919
toaster



1920

1920
handheld hair dryer



1927
shampoo



1928
sliced bread

1930

1929
frozen food

1938
electric dryer, toothbrush

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The Real Dirt

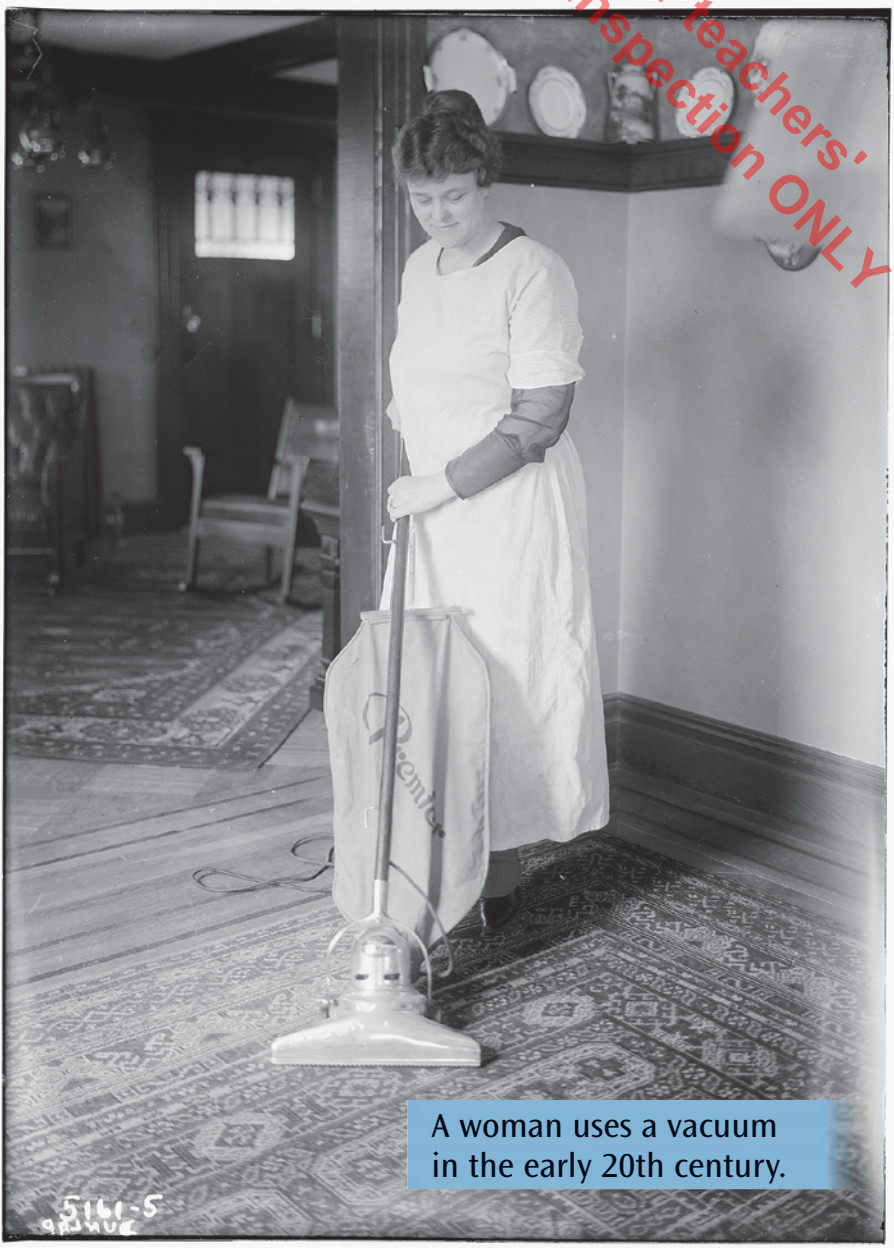
What inspires invention? For James Spangler, it was asthma. His job was to clean an entire department store each night. But his sweeping stirred up dust that bothered his lungs.

Spangler had an idea. He put an electric motor on his sweeper. Then, he added fan blades. The motor turned the blades to suck up dirt. All he needed was a place to collect the dirt. He used a pillowcase.

Spangler solved his problem. He invented the portable electric vacuum.



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A woman uses a vacuum in the early 20th century.

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Reader's Guide

1. Why did it take a long time for television to catch on?
2. What made James Spangler invent the vacuum?
3. Why did flying in airplanes become more popular than traveling by ship?
4. What are some ways your life would be different without these 20th century inventions?

