

5-8a

# Henry Ford

## Student A

### Early years

Henry Ford was born in 18 \_\_\_\_\_ in Wayne County, Michigan, one of \_\_\_\_\_ brothers and sisters. His parents were Irish immigrant farmers. At the time of his birth, there were 24 states in the Union and A \_\_\_\_\_

L \_\_\_\_\_ was the president of the USA. About 75% of Americans lived in rural communities.

After leaving school he went to Detroit to become an apprentice machinist. In Detroit he worked with the internal combustion engine for the first time.

After three years he returned to his father's farm. He spent nine years working part-time for \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ and working on private projects in his own machine shop on the farm. During this time he built a steam-powered tractor.

He moved back to Detroit in 18 \_\_\_\_\_, and in 1893 became chief engineer at the Detroit Edison Company plant. In 1896 he built \_\_\_\_\_: the Quadricycle.

In 1899 he formed \_\_\_\_\_.

However, he could not agree with his partners and in 1902 he left. The company reorganised itself as the \_\_\_\_\_.

### I will build a car for the great multitudes'

In 19 \_\_\_\_\_ he formed the Ford Motor Company, which was an immediate success. His most famous automobile, the \_\_\_\_\_, appeared in 19 \_\_\_\_\_. During its \_\_\_\_\_ years on the market \_\_\_\_\_ million were sold in the USA. In fact \_\_\_\_\_ % of all the cars sold in the world were Model Ts.

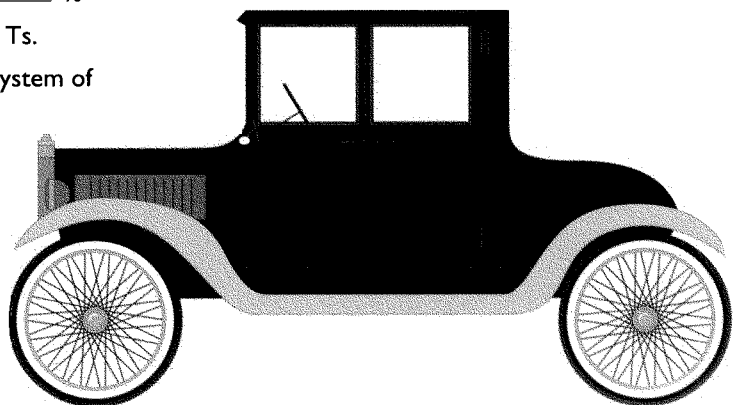
By 1913 he had perfected an assembly-line system of mass production. He could now build the chassis of a car in 93 minutes instead of the 728 minutes of other manufacturers. This allowed him to offer lower prices to customers. For the first time automobiles were within the reach of ordinary middle class people. In 1914 Ford

announced that he would pay workers \$5 a day (the industry average was \$2.34) and reduce the working day from nine to eight hours. This gave him a three-shift system, and kept the line running 24 hours a day. By 1908 Ford was \_\_\_\_\_. They wished to limit expansion and keep prices high: Ford's position was \_\_\_\_\_. After twelve years of negotiation and litigation Ford won the right to buy out all the minority shareholders. He paid \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for their shares. Now Ford controlled the entire company. He manufactured all the parts of his cars. He bought \_\_\_\_\_. Without having borrowed one cent, Ford was now operating in 33 countries.

### Later years

Ford's total control of the company and belief in himself led him to ignore market trends. Competitors began to offer technological innovations and choices of colour (the Model T came in black only). Ford lost sales leadership. In 1927 he closed the plant for \_\_\_\_\_ months to retool and launched the Model A. It was a success, but did not repeat the dominance of the Model T. By 1936, Ford was \_\_\_\_\_ in the market.

In 19 \_\_\_\_\_ he retired. His grandson, Henry Ford II, took over the company. Ford died in 1947 at home in Michigan. His Ford stock went to the Ford Foundation. It had been set up in 19 \_\_\_\_\_ in order to ensure that the Ford family kept control of the company. It became the richest private foundation in the world.



5-8b

# Henry Ford

## Student B

### Early years

Henry Ford was born in 1863 in \_\_\_\_\_, Michigan, one of eight brothers and sisters. His parents were Irish immigrant farmers. At the time of his birth, there were \_\_\_\_\_ states in the Union and Abraham Lincoln was the president of the USA. About \_\_\_\_\_ % of Americans lived in rural communities.

After leaving school he went to \_\_\_\_\_ to become \_\_\_\_\_. In Detroit he worked with the internal combustion engine for the first time. After \_\_\_\_\_ years he returned to his father's farm. He spent nine years working part-time for Westinghouse and working on private projects in his own machine shop on the farm. During this time he built a \_\_\_\_\_.

He moved back to Detroit in 1891, and in 1893 became \_\_\_\_\_ at the \_\_\_\_\_. In 1896 he built his first automobile: the Quadricycle.

In 1899 he formed the Detroit Automobile Company. However, he could not \_\_\_\_\_ and in 19 \_\_\_\_\_ he left. The company reorganised itself as the Cadillac Motor Car Company.

### 'I will build a car for the great multitudes'

In 1903 he formed the Ford Motor Company, which was an immediate success. His most famous automobile, the Model T, appeared in 1908. During its 19 years on the market 15.5 million were sold in the USA. In fact 50% of all the cars sold in the world were Model Ts.

By 1913 he had perfected \_\_\_\_\_. He could now build the chassis of a car in \_\_\_\_\_ minutes instead of the \_\_\_\_\_ minutes of other manufacturers. This allowed him to \_\_\_\_\_ to customers. For the first time automobiles were within the reach of ordinary middle class people. In 19 \_\_\_\_\_ Ford announced that he would pay workers \$ \_\_\_\_\_ a day

(the industry average was \$ \_\_\_\_\_) and reduce the working day from nine to \_\_\_\_\_ hours.

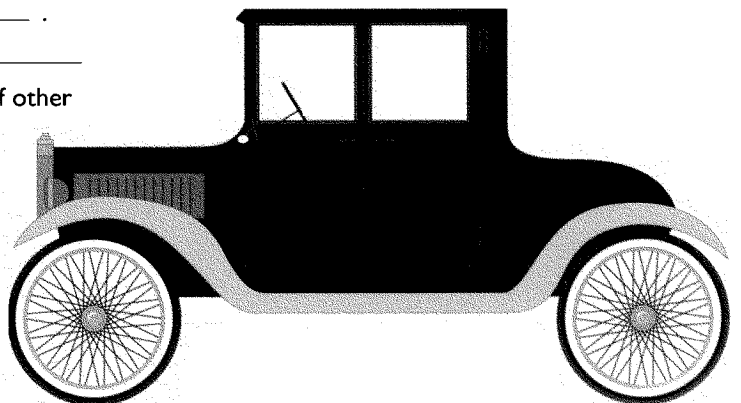
This gave him a three-shift system, and kept the line running 24 hours a day.

By 1908 Ford was arguing with his partners again. They wished to \_\_\_\_\_: Ford's position was the exact opposite. After twelve years of negotiation and litigation Ford won the right to \_\_\_\_\_. He paid \$106,000,000 for their shares. Now Ford controlled the entire company. He manufactured all the parts of his cars. He bought coal mines, iron mines, steel mills, timberland, a railroad... Without having borrowed one cent, Ford was now operating in \_\_\_\_\_ countries.

### Later years

Ford's total control of the company and belief in himself led him to ignore market trends. Competitors began to offer technological innovations and choices of colour (the Model T came in \_\_\_\_\_ only). Ford lost sales leadership. In 1927 he closed the plant for five months to retool and launched the \_\_\_\_\_. It was a success, but did not repeat the dominance of the Model T. By 1936, Ford was third in the market.

In 1945 he retired. His grandson, \_\_\_\_\_, took over the company. Ford died in 19 \_\_\_\_\_ at home in Michigan. His Ford stock went to the \_\_\_\_\_. It had been set up in 1936 in order to \_\_\_\_\_. It became the richest private foundation in the world.



# Henry Ford

## Worksheet Progress check 5-8a and 5-8b

### ACTIVITY

Groupwork and pairwork: reading and speaking

### AIM

To exchange information about the life of Henry Ford and to complete a text by asking questions.

### GRAMMAR AND FUNCTIONS

Asking and answering questions

Past tense

### VOCABULARY

*rural, apprentice, part-time, private projects, chief engineer, to form a company, partners, to be on the market, assembly line, mass production, within the reach of, industry average, shift, expansion, negotiation, litigation, minority shareholder, share, to buy out stock, vertical integration, mine, timberland, railroad, manufacture, market trends, competitor, technological innovations, sales leadership, retool, to launch, to retire, to take over*

Mechanical vocabulary: *chassis, steam powered, tractor, internal combustion engine, machinist*

### PREPARATION

Make one copy of Worksheet 5-8a and one copy of Worksheet 5-8b for each pair of students.

### TIME

15-25 minutes

### PROCEDURE

- 1 Tell the students that they are going to practise asking and answering questions.
- 2 Divide the class into two equal sized groups: A and B.
- 3 Give a copy of the appropriate worksheet (A or B) to each student.
- 4 Explain the task. The information which is missing from sheet A is in sheet B and vice versa. Each student should complete the text about Henry Ford by asking appropriate questions. For example:  
*When was Henry Ford born?*  
*In 1863. Where...?*
- 5 Give the students 5 minutes to read, check vocabulary, confer with other As or Bs and work out their first questions.
- 6 Ask the students to work in pairs, an A and a B in each pair.
- 7 Write these rules on the board and draw attention to them:
  - 1 *Complete the text by asking questions.*
  - 2 *Speak only in English.*
  - 3 *Do not show your worksheet to your partner until it is complete.*
- 8 Ask the students to begin the task.

### FOLLOW-UP

Students, either alone or in pairs, research the life of a prominent business person, possibly of their own nationality, and prepare a 1-2 minute presentation for the class.