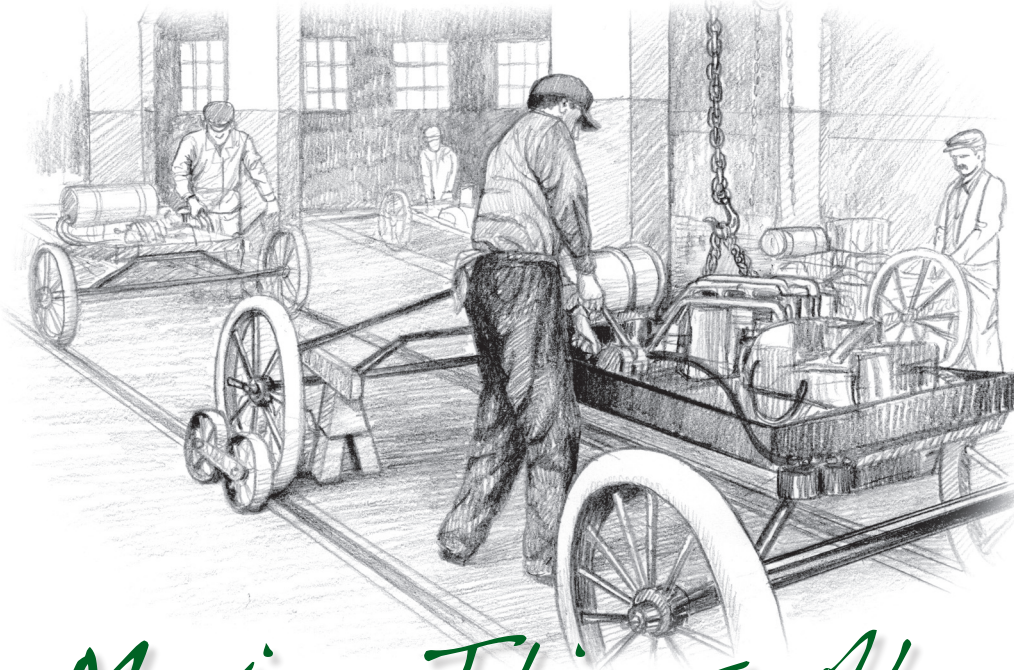




Moving Things Along

Read the following article about Henry Ford's car factory. Underline details in the article that you already know that help you connect to the topic.

Did you ever wonder how cars are made? Where do all the parts come from? Who puts them together? Today, thousands of cars are made each day. There are many different car companies. People work in **factories** to make cars. It is not hard to make lots of cars in one day. But years ago, it took a very long time.

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Most work was different long ago. People worked on things from start to finish. Think of a clay pot as an example. It would take one person to make a clay pot. First the potter would mold the clay. Then he would heat it. Then he would paint it. It could take more than a day to make one pot. It would take a very long time to make hundreds of pots. It was the same with many other products.

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In 1893, two brothers built the first car in the United States. Yet even ten years later, there were very few cars on the road. They were **expensive** to make, so they were expensive to buy. Only very rich people could **afford** cars. Others could not.

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Henry Ford started a car company in 1903. It was in Detroit. His company made only a few cars a day. Two or three men worked on each car. They worked on it from start to finish. These cars were expensive. But Henry Ford wanted to make a new kind of car. It would be one that anyone could afford.

20

He said, "I will build a motor car for the great multitude."

multitude (noun)
the common people

1. The reason that the first cars were very expensive was because _____

Continue reading the article to find out how Henry Ford changed the way cars were made. Keep underlining details in the article that you already know.

assembly line (noun)

a way of putting together a product in a factory

conveyor belt (noun)

a machine with a continuous moving part that carries things from one place to another

The old way of making cars only produced a few cars a day. So in 1913 Henry Ford came up with a new system. It was called an **assembly line**. Workers stood in place. A car body was placed on a **conveyor belt**. The car moved past each worker. The worker added one part to the car. The next worker added another part. By the end of the line, the car would be complete.

25 Cars moved down the line all day. Workers continued to put the same part on each car. The conveyor belt was carefully timed. This kept the line moving smoothly. No one had to wait. They could keep working as each car moved along.

30 Now each worker only needed to do one job. It might be putting on the tires. Or it might be putting in the seats. Each person became good at his job. That is because he did it a lot. He could do that job much faster. This meant that cars were made faster. Ford's factory could make more cars each day. Soon, it took just three minutes to make a new car!

35 The assembly line changed the way cars were made. It also caused the price of cars to go down. In 1927, Ford's Model T car cost just \$290. This was a good price. Almost any family could afford it. Suddenly it was possible for anyone to own a car.

40 This new way of working also helped to cut costs in the factory. Ford was able to offer his workers a good **salary**. They were paid better than at most other factories. Other car companies wanted to do well. They started using the assembly line, too. Soon all car companies had changed. They all made cars the way Ford did. It took lots of people to create a car, so there were many new jobs. Those workers were also paid well.

2. Working at Ford's factory was a good job because _____

Finish reading the article to find out how Ford's assembly line spread to other factories.

45 Ford's idea was used later in other kinds of factories. This helped lower the prices of other things, too. It also created more jobs for people.

Ford's assembly line changed factories forever. It changed factory workers, too. Before assembly lines, most factory workers were **skilled**. They were carpenters. Or they were **mechanics**. They needed special training to do their jobs. Now people who worked in factories could be **unskilled**. They needed to learn only one job. They could be very good at this job. But they did not need to learn any other jobs.

55 Today many factories use assembly lines. But there have been other changes, too. Sometimes a few workers work together. They work on one thing. But they all do a few jobs. This helps keep the work more interesting. **Technology** has also changed assembly lines. **Robots** can do some jobs now. **Computers** help run some of the machines. Products can be made even faster. New factories run fast. They are faster than even Henry Ford could have imagined.

3. Ford changed the way factory work was done by _____

4. How do you think technology will continue to improve factory work?

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