

ELON MUSK

A video lesson, reading and research about this tech giant.

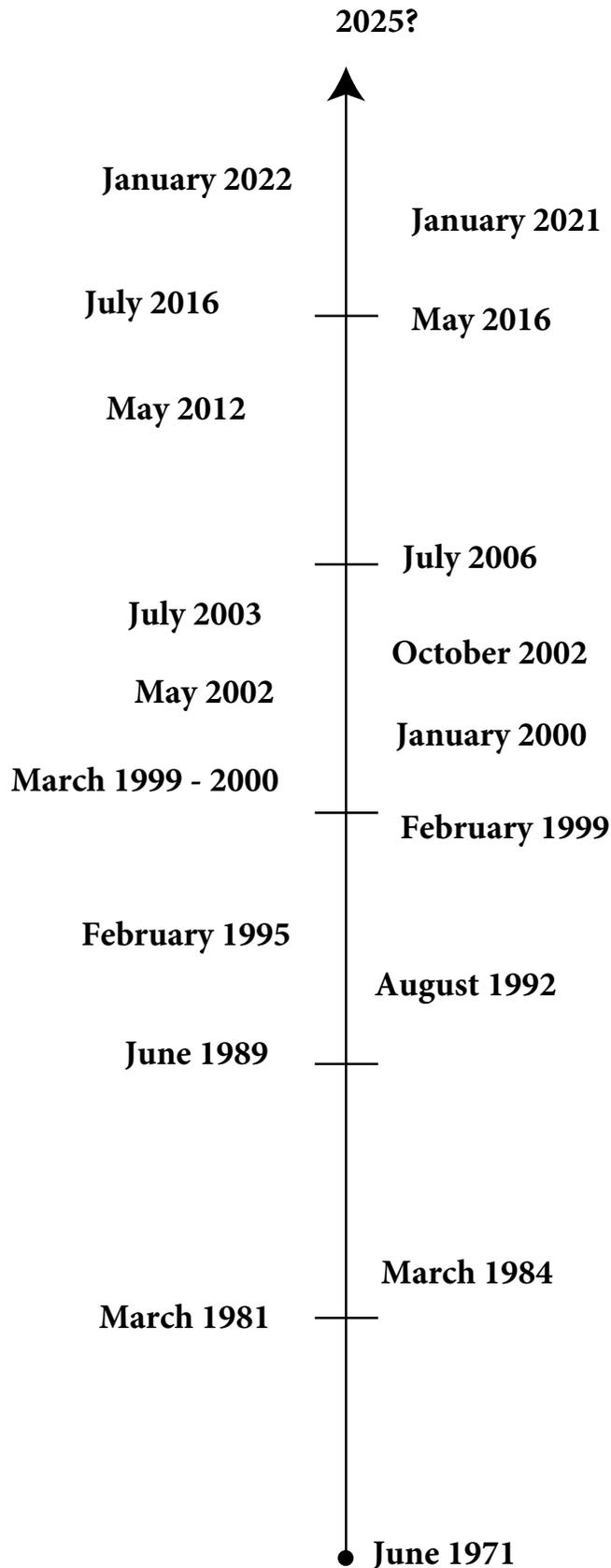


Reading. Comprehension questions.
Discussion questions (technology)
Research his life template.
Answer keys.



Elon Musk - Life Time Line.

Listen to someone talking about the life of Elon Musk. Note the main things that happened in his life for these years.



WHO IS ELON MUSK?

June 1971. Born in Pretoria, South Africa. Musk was born on June 28, 1971, in Pretoria, South Africa. He is the son of Maye Musk, a model and dietitian from Canada, and Errol Musk, a South African electromechanical engineer, pilot and sailor.



March 1981. Interest in Computing. His parents divorced when Elon was 10 during this time he really got into computers. At the age of 10, he developed an interest in computing with the Commodore VIC-20 and taught himself computer programming.

March 1984. Sold his first video game. By the age of 12, Musk sold the code of a BASIC-based video game he created called Blaster, to a magazine called PC and Office Technology, for approximately \$500.

June 1989. Moved to Canada. At the age of 17, Elon Musk moved to Canada to attend Queen's University, avoiding mandatory service in the South African military.

August 1992. University of Pennsylvania. Musk left Canada to study business and physics at the University of Pennsylvania. He graduated with an undergraduate degree in economics and stayed for a second bachelor's degree in physics.

February 1995. Started Zip2. Musk and his brother, Kimbal, started Zip2, a web software company that developed and marketed an Internet city guide for the newspaper publishing industry. The company raised money from a small group of angel investors.

February 1999. Sold Zip2 to Compaq. Compaq acquired Zip2 for US\$307 million in cash and US\$34 million in stock options in February 1999. Musk received US\$22 million for his 7 percent share from the sale.

March 1999. Cofounded X.com. Musk co-founded X.com, a financial services and payments company via email. It achieved a high level of security without it being complicated for the user to make the transfer.

March 2000. X.com to PayPal. X.com merged with Confinity Inc., a software company based in Silicon Valley. Musk was attracted to Confinity because of its easy payment system. The merged company changed its name to PayPal.

WHO IS ELON MUSK?

January 2000. First Wife. Musk married Canadian author Justine Wilson after meeting her while attending the University of Queens. They had six children together but their first son, Nevada, passed away in infancy.



May 2002. Founded SpaceX. Musk founded Space Exploration Technologies, or SpaceX, with US\$100 million of his early fortune. SpaceX develops and manufactures space launch vehicles with the goal of eventually building more affordable spacecraft that would make it possible to one day reach and colonize Mars.

October 2002. eBay acquired PayPal. PayPal was acquired by eBay for US\$1.5 billion in stock, of which Musk won 150 million USD in eBay shares.

July 2003. Tesla is Founded. Engineers Martin Eberhard and Marc Tarpenning founded Tesla Motors. Elon Musk came into the project in 2004, leading an investment round in the Startup with a personal contribution of \$70 million. Musk participated in designing their first electric car which was a Tesla Roadster sports car based on the British Lotus Elise.

July 2006. Cofounded SolarCity. Musk provided the initial concept and financial capital for SolarCity. Co-founded by his cousins Lyndon and Peter Rive, SolarCity develops and sells solar panels and solar roof tiles.

May 2012. SpaceX Dragon. SpaceX's vehicle, Dragon docked with the International Space Station (ISS), making history as the first commercial company to launch and berth a vehicle to the International Space Station. September 2014. Tesla Autopilot. Tesla Motors announced its first version of AutoPilot. Its system is capable of lane control with autonomous steering, braking and speed limit adjustment based on signals image recognition. Musk believes that before too long, the software will be good enough that it can operate without active human oversight.

July 2016. Neuralink. Musk co-founded Neuralink, a neurotechnology. Startup company centred on creating devices that can be implanted in the human brain, with the eventual purpose of helping human beings merge with software and keep pace with advancements in artificial intelligence.

ELON MUSK

A tech giant of today and tomorrow.



Read about the life of Elon Musk and answer the questions.

Elon Musk is an engineer from South Africa known for his success with PayPal, Tesla, and SpaceX. Whether creating one of the world's most used online payment systems, sending cars to space, or building his own rocket, Musk is constantly innovating for the future. A big part of this mission is how he plans to power the planet.

Musk is not only a technological entrepreneur, but also an avid believer in the future of renewable energy. In 2002, he formed The Musk Foundation, which focuses on the areas of renewable energy, engineering education, and pediatric health. Musk developed the Tesla motor, which is in cars that run on rechargeable batteries instead of gasoline. He wants to eliminate the use of carbon - a chemical that is needed to power cars that run on gasoline - and have the world switch to the same model that Tesla cars use. Cars like the ones Musk designed could help stop a large amount of chemicals and pollutants from reaching the atmosphere.

Lithium-ion batteries—enough to supply 2,500 homes each—are being produced with the goal of one day replacing natural gas that is typically used to generate electricity. In 2024, Musk plans to build the world's largest virtual power plant. Musk famously said, *“Let’s say if the only thing we had was solar energy—if that was the only power source—if you just took a small section of Spain you could power all of Europe Or in the case of the U.S., like a little corner of Nevada or Utah would power the United States.”*

According to Musk, we would only need to cover an area of land that is about the size of Spain to power the entire Earth renewably.



Musk predicts that seeing regular non-solar roofs on homes will be a thing of the past by 2032. Tesla's Solar Roofs are made up of high-end slate tiles that cost an average of \$21.85 per square foot and are "solar ready" to make homeowners a lifetime of energy savings.

Even though Elon Musk may change the world with his inventions, you are still important and can help too! Turning off the lights when you are not using them, taking shorter hot showers, recycling, or planting a tree are all great ways that you can help keep the world a healthier place!

1. What element does Musk want to eliminate the use of?

2. What does Musk plan to do in 2024?

3. How can we power the whole world, according to Musk?

4. How can you help keep the world a healthier place?

Name:

Date:

THE STORY



OF



The Life & Times Of Elon Musk

In the boxes below, share your story! What important events have happened in this person's life? Research and then present the information to the class.

Personal Information

Family Life

Major Accomplishments

3 Interesting Facts

Early Life

Famous Quote

What Their Life Teaches Us



ELON MUSK

Elon Musk was born in 1971, in South Africa. Little information is known about his early life, but it clearly wasn't happy. His parents

divorced when he was ten, and Elon lived with his father. It seems there was a great deal of harsh discipline around, and not a lot of love, and he was bullied at school. He thinks all these difficulties made him strong, however, and worries that his children have too few struggles in life!

Elon left South Africa in 1989, to avoid doing military service for apartheid government. He graduated in Physics and Economics in the USA, and started a PhD in Physics, but dropped out after only two days. The Internet was booming, and Elon wanted to seize the countless opportunities it offered. In a short time, he made \$187m from founding and selling Zip2, which produced online city guides and PayPal. He used the money to fund the ventures closest to his heart – alternative technology and space travel.

Musk's car company, Tesla, makes electric cars that every car fanatic would desire – the Roadster sports model can accelerate from 0 to 60 mph in 3.7 seconds. His company SpaceX successfully launched its Falcon9 rocket in 2012. There are plenty of private rocket enthusiasts (Amazon's Jeff Bezos is another famous one), but Musk's rockets were the first to dock with the International Space Station. In 2018, a bigger rocket, The Falcon Heavy, took a Tesla Roadster into space! Both types of Falcon rockets are reusable – each rocket booster can land and be used again.

Musk currently has several companies on the go, and a great number of projects, including artificial intelligence, solar energy, and a new tunnel-boring machine (the idea came while he was stuck in traffic). His tunnelling company is called The Boring Company.

Technology – Discussion Questions



Do you get excited by new technology? What kinds of technology interest you?

Is technology developing faster than it used to? Are you worried about being left behind? When you get a new product, do you read the instruction manual? Or do you just figure it out?

How much time do you spend online each week? Is it too much time, or a reasonable amount?

What are some of your favorite websites? What can you do on them?

Advances in medical technology mean people are living longer. What are some of the downsides of this? How old do you hope to live?

Do you have a tech hero that you look up to? Who? Why?

How do you feel if you forget your mobile phone and leave it somewhere?

Which electronics brands do you trust most? Are you loyal to one brand?

Are you an early adopter? Do you like to have cutting edge technology? Are there any disadvantages to buying the latest product?

Some people dislike or fear technology. Do you know anyone like this?

Do you read e-books? What are their advantages and disadvantages when compared with paper books?

Is there an electronic product you want these days? What is it? How will it make your life better?

Do you play computer games? What do you say to people who believe they are a waste of time?

What crazy future technology are you looking forward to? For example, flying cars or personal robots.

Which social networking services (SNS) do you use? What do you like or dislike about them?

How do you feel about dating websites or apps? Would you use one?

Some people prefer to live with less technology in their lives. Can you understand the desire to live a simpler life?

Many science fiction movies present a dark vision of the future. Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of humanity?

TECHNOLOGY DISCUSSION

STUDENT A

- 1) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'technology'?
- 2) Is technology a good or a bad thing?
- 3) What new technology could you not live without?
- 4) Do you like reading about technology?
- 5) Do you like using technology to learn?
- 6) What do you think very old people think of modern technology?
- 7) How has technology changed society?
- 8) Has technology made us more impatient?
- 9) Max Frisch said: "Technology is the knack of arranging the world so that we don't have to experience it." Do you agree with him?
- 10) Mark Kennedy said: "All of the biggest technological inventions created by man - the airplane, the automobile, the computer - say little about his intelligence, but speak volumes about his laziness." Do you agree?



TECHNOLOGY DISCUSSION

STUDENT B

- 1) What do you think of today's technology?
- 2) What do you think of tomorrow's technology?
- 3) Do you think we've become obsessed with technology?
- 4) Do you always trust technology?
- 5) Does technology ever let you down?
- 6) What things would you never let technology replace?
- 7) Has technology made our lives better than our grandparents' lives?
- 8) What technology is dangerous?
- 9) Frank Lloyd Wright said: "If it [technology] keeps up, man will waste away all his limbs but the push-button finger." What does this mean? Do you like this quote?
- 10) Alan M. Eddison said: "Modern technology... Owe ecology... An apology." What does this mean? Do you agree?



Elon Musk: Innovator and Tech Guru

The 21st century is all about innovation. Technology is progressing at an unprecedented rate and the way we live is changing along with it. When historians look back on the early 21st century, they will identify a handful of people who embodied the supremacy of technology. Elon Musk will undoubtedly feature prominently on this list.



Global Citizen

Many people are surprised to learn that Elon Musk was born and raised in Pretoria, South Africa. He had a difficult childhood, with his parents separating when he was nine years old. As an adult, Elon has become estranged from his father. He moved to Canada when he was 17 and then to the United States of America. Currently, he sits quite high on a number of global rankings. His net worth, currently around 93 billion dollars, makes him the world's 5th richest person. Forbes rated him the most innovative leader of 2019. And his time as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Tesla makes him the longest standing CEO of an automotive company.

Tesla, Inc.

This automotive company is perhaps what most people associate with Elon Musk. It's an interesting quirk of history that one of his greatest achievements would involve a company named after someone as eccentric and brilliant as him. Tesla Incorporated was founded in 2003 and named for Nikola Tesla, the Serbian inventor and scientist who contributed more than anyone else to the development of electrical technology. Like Musk, Tesla was no ordinary man. It's fitting that his name should be attached to a company that makes electric cars. Tesla, Inc. is rapidly changing how we think about transport and energy use. Who knows – by the time you are old enough to learn to drive, it may well be in an electrical vehicle!



SpaceX

But Musk's most interesting project – outlandish or prophetic, depending on your point of view – is space exploration. In

2002, he founded Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (SpaceX) to pursue the vision of making space travel cheaper and perhaps even colonizing Mars. In May 2020, SpaceX sent a manned craft into orbit and docked it at the International Space Station (ISS). Whether or not humans end up farming on Mars, Elon Musk has revived an entire generation's enthusiasm for space travel. Great things tend to happen when people have their eyes focused upward. Who knows what the future might bring?

X Æ A-12

Much like Nikola Tesla, Elon Musk doesn't leave his eccentricity at the office. He recently named his youngest child "X Æ A-12". The pronunciation is something like "eks ash A twelve". The first letter is simply the letter "X" and the second one, which is a combination of "a" and "e", is actually a letter in several Scandinavian languages. In those languages, it is referred to as "ash". The "A-12" refers to the Lockheed A-12 "archangel", which is a military aircraft. Publicity stunt? Maybe. But there's no doubt that Elon Musk represents our age, in which tradition and stability are giving way to innovation and uncertainty. We are certainly living in interesting times.

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1. What element does Musk want to eliminate the use of?

carbon

2. What does Musk plan to do in 2024?

build a virtual power plant

3. How can we power the whole world, according to Musk?

With solar energy, cover the size of Spain.

4. How can you help keep the world a healthier place?

turn off lights, shorter hot showers, recycle

plant a tree

Elon Musk: Innovator and Tech Guru

Questions:

1. What century are we currently living in?
2. Find an adjective in par. 1 that we use to refer to something that has never happened before.
3. Do you know what “prominently” means? (Par. 1)
4. Find a noun in par. 1 that means a state of having power.
5. Where was Elon Musk born?
6. Do you know someone in Pretoria, South Arica?
7. In what year was he rated the most innovative person?
8. Find an adjective in par. 2 that means “separated” or “disconnected”.
9. What does it mean if something or someone is “innovative”? (Par. 2)
10. What does the acronym CEO stand for?
11. When was Tesla Incorporated established?
12. What connection does the writer make between Nikola Tesla and Elon Musk?
13. Find a phrase in par. 3 that means a funny or strange fact in history.
14. Do you know someone you could describe as “eccentric”? (Par. 3) Is this a good or a bad thing?
15. Find an adverb in par. 3 that means “quickly”.
16. Name two of the aims of SpaceX.
17. How has this company affected the way people think about space travel?
18. Find an adjective in par. 4 that means “very strange”.
19. Do you know any synonyms for “enthusiasm”? (Par. 4)
20. What was the inspiration for the A-12 in the child’s name?

Answers:

1. The 21st century.
2. Unprecedented
3. Obviously, or in a way that stands out.
4. Supremacy
5. Pretoria, South Africa
6. Open answer.
7. 2019
8. Estranged
9. Creative, able to generate new ideas
10. Chief Executive Officer
11. 2003
12. They are both innovative and brilliant people.
13. Quirk of history.
14. Open answer: eccentric can be used negatively or positively depending on context.
15. Rapidly
16. Colonizing Mars and making space travel cheaper.
17. It has made people interested in it again.
18. Outlandish
19. Excitement, desire, interest
20. The A-12 aircraft which was the precursor to the SR-71 Blackbird.

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