Discuss these questions and then read the article and check your ideas:

1. When 2,000 Brits were asked the question above, what ten things were on their list?
2. How many cups of tea do Brits brew a year?
3. When and how was the teabag invented?
4. When did the wheel start being used on carts?
5. What had the wheel been used for before being used on carts?
6. Which age is seen as the most inventive by Brits?
The Most Ingenious Inventions

vacuum cleaner at Eltham Palace in South-East London. With the research revealing that the Victorian age is seen as the most inventive, the displays also include an ice-cream maker from the era at Brodsworth Hall in South Yorkshire and the Bell telephone at Queen Victoria’s Osborne House on the Isle of Wight.

Of the ten inventions on the Brits’ list, which three do you think are the most innovative? What about the most useful? The teabag was invented by accident. Do you know of any other things that were invented by accident? Which was the most inventive age in your country?

Explain the meaning of the **highlighted** expressions in these extracts from the article:

1. ...you can **rely on** them agreeing on one answer in particular.
2. **Taking its place** in the top ten alongside such essentials as the wheel...
3. **Little wonder**, perhaps, in a nation so addicted to the cuppa...
4. The teabag was invented **by accident** but has stood the test of time.
5. Little has changed since, **apart from** some now being round or pyramid shaped.
6. They range from **groundbreaking** Roman armour at Corbridge Roman Town...

**Match the expressions to these definitions:**

- **it is not surprising**
- **except for**
- **depend on**
- **by chance**
- **become part of a particular group of people or things**
- **using new methods, or achieving new results**

**Write sentences of your own with the words and expressions.**

*e.g. Sorry, I dropped the phone by accident and it has broken.*

**Complete these extracts from the article with the appropriate prepositions:**

Also ______ the list, which has been compiled in no particular order...
The teabag was invented ______ accident...

**Certain nouns are preceded by specific prepositions. All the nouns below are preceded by ‘on’ except for three. Which three are the exceptions and which prepositions are they usually preceded by?**

- **first place**
- **the planet**
- **lunch**
- **the phone**
- **a trip**
- **business**
- **strike**
- **mistake**
- **TV**
- **the radio**

**Write sentences of your own with the prepositions and nouns.**
The Most Ingenious Inventions

Match the words and expressions to these definitions:

1. depend on
2. become part of a particular group of people or things
3. it is not surprising
4. by chance
5. except for
6. using new methods, or achieving new results

Complete this extract from the article with the appropriate preposition:

Also **ON** the list, which has been compiled in no particular order...
The teabag was invented **BY** accident...

Certain nouns are preceded by specific prepositions. All the nouns below are preceded by ‘on’ except for three. Which three are the exceptions and which prepositions are they usually preceded by?

IN first place
ON the planet
AT lunch
ON the phone
ON a trip
ON business
ON strike
BY mistake
ON TV
ON the radio