

Toilets of the future 未来的厕所

Vocabulary: Toilets, technology and sanitation 厕所, 技术和公共卫生

One of the world's richest men has taken a close interest in one of man's most basic functions: visiting the toilet. Bill Gates's charitable organisation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, is looking for inventors to design the **loo** of the future, which, they hope, would improve **sanitation** for millions of people around the world.



So, what's wrong with the traditional **flush toilet**? Firstly, it wastes a huge amount of potential drinking water. This is a real problem in many areas of the developing world, where, according to United Nations estimates, unsafe sanitation causes half of all **hospitalisations**. Younger people are particularly at risk. Illnesses which cause **diarrhoea** are responsible for the deaths of about 1.5 million children a year. Secondly, standard **lavatories** simply aren't practical in remote areas.

The challenge set by Bill Gates was to come up with a **latrine** which works without running water, electricity or a **septic tank**. It also needed to operate for less than 5 cents (0.3 RMB).

28 designs were displayed at the recent Reinvent the Toilet fair in Seattle, USA. Among them was one which turned **poo** into electricity using microwaves, another which converted **excrement** into **charcoal**, and yet another which used **urine** for **flushing**.

But the winner was a **solar-powered** design which generated **hydrogen** gas and electricity. The team from the California Institute of Technology picked up a prize of \$100,000, almost 650,000 RMB.

But clearly Bill Gates doesn't feel he's **flushing money down the toilet**. After the Seattle event he said, "We couldn't be happier with the response we've gotten." Gates has even pledged \$370m (2.2 billion RMB) more to the future toilet project. They hope to field test more **prototypes** over the next three years.

词汇表请参看答案与词汇部分

Quiz 测验

阅读短文并回答问题。

1. Why is Bill Gates paying people to invent new toilets?
2. What does a traditional flush toilet use lots of?
3. How many children die because of diarrhoea?
4. What three words are used in the report meaning 'toilet'?
5. How is the winning design powered?

Exercise 练习

请你在不参考课文的情况下完成下列练习。从每个表格中选择一个意思合适的单词填入句子的空格处。

1. Dirty water and poor _____ causes huge problems in the developing world.

sanitary	sanitation	sanity	insanity
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2. Most toilets use a _____ system.

flushed	flusher	flush	flash
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3. Some toilets without a sewage system use a septic _____.

tank	trunk	box	crate
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4. A _____-powered machine uses the sun to power it.

sun	sunny	sunshine	solar
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5. The scientists developed a _____ to see how good the design is.

stereotype	prototype	type	stereo
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Answers and Glossary 答案与词汇

Quiz 小测验

1. Why is Bill Gates paying people to invent new toilets? It would improve sanitation for millions of people around the world.
2. What does a traditional toilet use lots of? A huge amount of potential drinking water.
3. How many children die because of diarrhoea? 1.5 million children a year.
4. What three words are used in the report meaning 'toilet'? loo, lavatory, latrine.
5. How is the winning design powered? The winner was a solar-powered design.

Exercise 练习

1. Dirty water and poor sanitation causes huge problems in the developing world.
2. Most toilets use a flush system.
3. Some toilets without a sewage system use a septic tank.
4. A solar-powered machine uses the sun to power it.
5. The scientists developed a prototype to see how good the design is.

Glossary 词汇表

a loo	(英式俚语) 一个厕所
sanitation	公共卫生条件或状况
a flush toilet	一个抽水马桶
hospitalisation	住院
diarrhoea	腹泻
a lavatory	一个盥洗室, 厕所
a latrine	一个公共厕所
a septic tank	一个化粪池
poo	大便
excrement	粪便
charcoal	木炭
urine	尿
flushing	冲洗
solar-powered	用太阳能驱动的
hydrogen	氢气
flushing money down the toilet	把钱从厕所冲下去, (比喻) 浪费钱
prototypes	样机或模型