

# Device May Help Blind People See

Inventors in Belgium have created a **device**<sup>1</sup> that might enable thousands of blind people to see. The invention includes a small video camera mounted on eyeglasses.

Blindness can occur for many different reasons. One reason is damage to the **retina**, the membrane that lines the inner eyeball. The retina picks up visual messages in the form of light. Then it sends those messages to the brain through the **optic nerve**. If a person's retina is not working, messages are not sent to the brain.

The Belgian scientists created a tiny electronic device that takes over for a damaged retina. They **implant**<sup>2</sup> the device inside the blind person's head, just behind the eye. The patient wears a pair of glasses with a little video camera mounted on them. The camera takes pictures and sends the images to the implant in the head. Then the implant electronically **stimulates**<sup>3</sup> the optic nerve, sending the visual images to the brain. The scientists have tested the device in two patients. The results have been promising.

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<sup>1</sup> **device:** a piece of equipment to serve a special purpose

<sup>2</sup> **implant:** to insert in living tissue

<sup>3</sup> **stimulates:** makes active or more active



## Question Sheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**“Device May Help Blind People See” Questions**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The main idea of this passage is
- a. many people are blind from a damaged retina.
  - b. scientists invented a device to help blind people see.
  - c. scientists in Belgium are concerned about the visually impaired.
  - d. scientists have tested their device on two patients.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Which of the following does *not* support the main idea?
- a. The scientists are in Belgium.
  - b. The device includes special glasses for the patient to wear.
  - c. The device sends messages to the optic nerve.
  - d. Scientists need to implant a device behind the patient's eye.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Before the device stimulates the optic nerve,
- a. a visual message goes to the brain.
  - b. the person is aware of what he or she is seeing.
  - c. a camera is mounted on glasses.
  - d. all of the above.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The retina
- a. sends message to the brain.
  - b. picks up visual information as light.
  - c. determines what color eyes you have.
  - d. protects the eye.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. List a detail and explain how it supports the main idea.

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## Question Sheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**“Device May Help Blind People See” Answer Sheet**

- MI 1. The main idea of this passage is
- a. many people are blind from a damaged retina.
  - b. scientists invented a device to help blind people see.**
  - c. scientists in Belgium are concerned about the visually impaired.
  - d. scientists have tested their device on two patients.
- MI 2. Which of the following does not necessarily support the main idea?
- a. The scientists are in Belgium.**
  - b. The device includes special glasses for the patient to wear.
  - c. The device sends messages to the optic nerve.
  - d. Scientists need to implant a device behind the patient's eye.
- Seq. 3. Before the device stimulates the optic nerve,
- a. a visual message goes to the brain.
  - b. the person is aware of what he or she is seeing.
  - c. a camera is mounted on glasses.**
  - d. all of the above.
- EI 4. The retina
- a. sends message to the brain.
  - b. picks up visual information as light.**
  - c. determines what color eyes you have.
  - d. protects the eye.
- MI 5. List a detail and explain how it supports the main idea.

Answers will vary. Students should describe how a detail from the passage supports the main idea.

*Suggested Additional Vocabulary: enable, membrane*