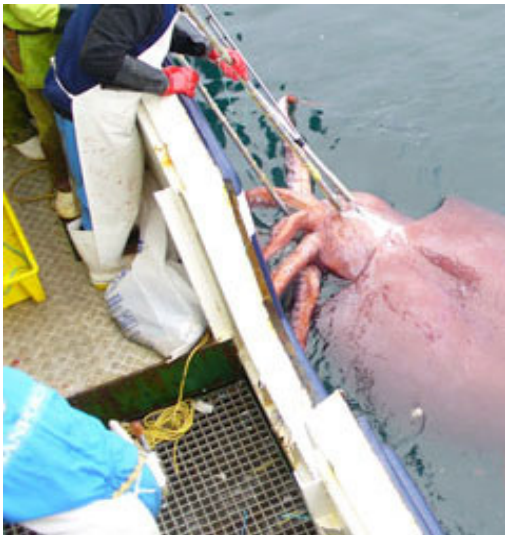
DISCOVERIES AND INVENTIONS PAGE 1

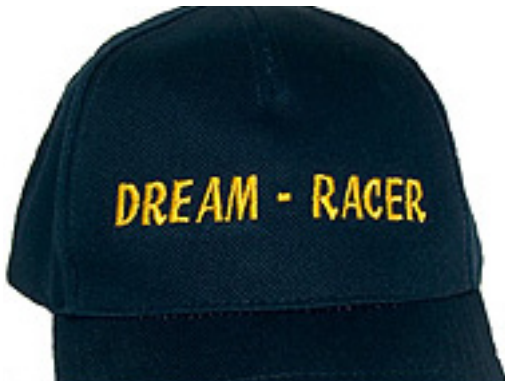
Total pages 2 / student pages: 2 of cut-up pieces / week of 21.05.07 / intermediate+

Cut up and share out the stories among the students. Ask the students to read the headline to the class first and the other students can predict the story before he/she tells the class what the story is really about.



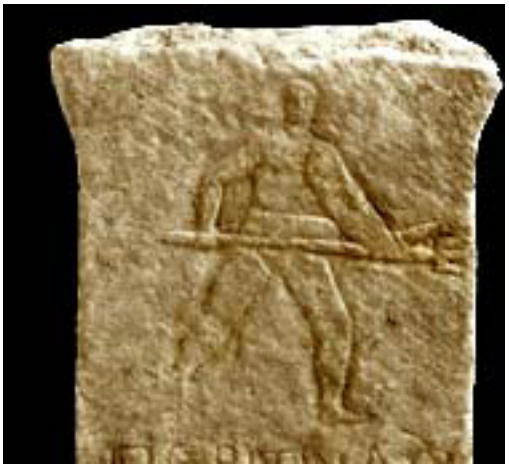
Monster of the oceans

The largest single invertebrate animal ever found was recently captured by longline fishermen in Antarctic seas. Known as a colossal squid, it weighed 450kg (990lb), about twice the weight of the largest squid previously captured. It has eyes larger than a blue whale's, a razor-like beak as big as a cantaloupe melon and a tongue covered in sharp teeth. Its eight arms and two longer feeding tentacles are armed with toothed suckers and sharp hooks. It swims with muscular fins and a big funnel for jet propulsion, and the undersides of its eyes have rows of lights like truck running lights. It is only the fourth non-juvenile of this squid species ever examined by scientists.



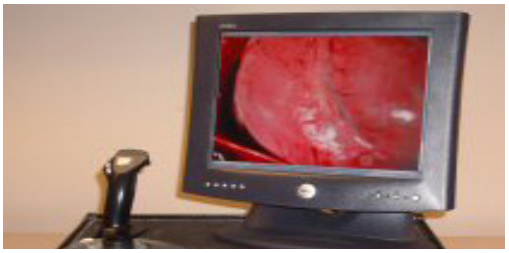
Smart hat brings play to disabled

A "smart" cap that allows disabled children to "drive" radio-controlled cars and boats has been launched. The Dream-Racer device has four motion sensors that detect small movements of the head, which are then fed wirelessly to control the toy's direction. The UK invention has also been adapted to allow disabled people to play games on Sony's PlayStation consoles. The technology was originally designed for a five-year-old boy who was paralysed in a car crash.



Gladiators' graveyard discovered

Scientists believe they have for the first time identified an ancient graveyard for gladiators. The remains were found at Ephesus in Turkey, a major city of the Roman world. Gladiators were the sporting heroes of the ancient world. The Ephesus graves containing thousands of bones were found along with three gravestones, clearly depicting gladiators. Analysis of their bones and injuries has given new insight into how they lived, fought and died. Diggers found at least 67 individuals, nearly all aged 20 to 30. One striking bit of evidence is that many have healed wounds.



'Robobug' for heart ops

A robot caterpillar which can crawl over a beating heart to perform vital operations has been invented by scientists. The inch-long 'HeartLander' is inserted with keyhole surgery, then attaches itself to the organ with two sucker 'feet'. It is controlled by a joystick and can be used to inject drugs or install pacemakers.

Coconut oil powers island's cars

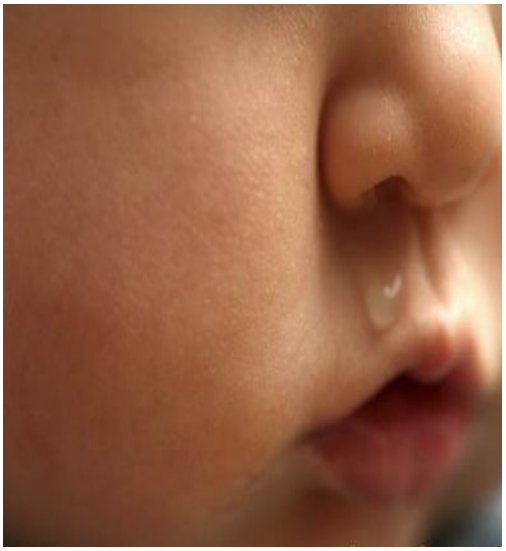
People on the island of Bougainville in Papua New Guinea have found their own solution to high energy prices - the humble coconut. For years, the people of Bougainville have been dependent on expensive fuel imported onto the island. Increasingly, locals are turning to a cheaper and far more sustainable alternative to diesel. Coconut oil is being produced at a growing number of backyard refineries in order to replace diesel. The refineries also produce oils for cooking and cosmetics as well as soap.

Star dies in monstrous explosion

A massive star about 150 times the size of the Sun exploded in what could be a long-sought new type of supernova, NASA scientists have said. The supernova star, called SN 2006gy, was originally discovered in September last year. The explosion was seen to peak for about 70 days, during which it is thought to have shone about five times more brightly than any supernova seen in the past. "Of all exploding stars ever observed, this was the king," Alex Filippenko, one of the NASA-backed astronomers observing the phenomenon, said.

Baldness cure breakthrough?

Scientists have coaxed stem cells into growing hair for the first time, it has been revealed. The discovery that it is possible to develop new follicles later in life paves the way for new hair loss treatments. The University of Pennsylvania researchers made their discovery when studying the process of wound healing in mice. They found that as the wound heals, new hair follicles form underneath the new skin - allowing new hair to sprout. Although all work so far has been carried out in mice, the researchers are hopeful a similar technique could lead to treatments for humans.



Fake snot improves robot nose

British scientists say artificial snot produced a dramatic improvement in the range of smells detected by an artificial nose. A natural nose uses over 100 million specialised receptors but electronic noses, used in a number of commercial settings, often have fewer than 50 sensors. A team at Warwick and Leicester universities coated a channel of the sensor used by an "electronic nose" with a mix of polymers that mimics the mucus in the natural nose. The team found the artificial snot substantially improved the performance of their electronic nose, allowing it to tell apart similar smells such as milk and banana.