The history of television

The main entertainment for people at first was books and newspapers. Next, radio became entertainment. Moving pictures with color and sound followed. The next step was television. Television provided a way that entertainment of all kinds could be brought into the home.

In the late 1800's, people conducted experiments on how to send signals to a receiver. The coaxial cable was invented in1880 by Oliver Heaviside. It is a type of cable used to distribute cable TV signals. In 1925, John L. Baird conducted the first transmission of images. In 1927, Philo Farnsworth invented the first television system. These early discoveries started rapid progress in creating the television industry.

RCA (Radio Corporation of America), who had developed the radio industry, invested heavily in electronic television. In 1939, television audiences saw the opening of the New York's World's Fair. Early television was very rudimentary. Picture quality on a CBS (Columbia Broadcasting Company) newscast made it difficult to see a newsman using a pointer to find locations on a map for his audience. NBC (National Broadcasting Company) and ABC (American Broadcasting Company) came upon the scene.

Before 1947, the number of televisions in homes in America was relatively small. The first commercial television broadcasts began in 1947. Formats for television programs were taken from radio programs. At first, networks used radio profits to pay for the television broadcasts, but soon television became profitable. The number of televisions in homes rose up to twelve million by 1951.

Between 1953 and 1955, television programming took some new turns. The networks did not rely as heavily on the formats of radio. They began to depend on theater and developed television dramas. Viewers preferred types of programs which brought back the same characters each week. Game shows, like the $64,000 Question, became very popular.

The term 'anchorman' was probably first used in 1952 when Walter Cronkite covered the Presidential convention for CBS. In the fall of 1960, the first Presidential debate was televised. The debate was between John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon. Television news became a competitor to radio newscasts. In 1964, programs started to be broadcast in color.

The three major television networks had affiliate stations in all major cities. Viewers were mostly limited to watching what these three networks chose to broadcast. In 1967, a Carnegie Commission Report favored the creation of a fourth network which would be not for profit. The network was called PBS (Public Broadcasting System). Its funding comes from corporate sponsorships, viewers and Congress.

In the 1970's, cable TV entered the picture. Some of these cable networks were ESPN, Nickelodeon and C-Span. CNN became a 24-hour news network. In the 1980's, viewers bought home video cassette recorders and could record programs to watch later. They could rent or buy films to play on their televisions.

In 1996, the networks began to show ratings of their programs indicating the age group for which the show was intended. At least one television existed in 98% of American households. High definition broadcasting (HDTV) which produces a clearer picture began in 1998. However, not all television sets could pick up these transmissions. New televisions were manufactured with that capability. Audiences now can view television programming on a computer. This might in the future cut down on television viewing. Those who own televisions watch it an average of two and one-half hours per day.

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1) Which of the following was first called an 'anchorman' on the television news?

A: Walter Cronkite **B:** Richard M. Nixon **C:** John L. Baird **D:** Philo Farnsworth

2) Which of the following conducted the first transmission of images in 1925?

A: Walter Cronkite **B:** John L. Baird **C:** Philo Farnsworth **D:** John F. Kennedy

3) In which of the following time periods did cable TV begin?

A: 1960's **B:** 1970's **C:** 1980's **D:** 1990's

4) Which of the following for-profit networks existed into the 1960's?

A: CBS, ABC, NBB **B:** CBS, ABC, NBC **C:** NVD, CBS, NBC **D:** CBS, CNN, ABC

5) Which of the following is a true statement?

A: Television programs cannot be viewed on a computer.

B: Television networks produce ratings for their programs.

C: CBS stands for Certified Broadcasting System.

D: In 1922, the opening of the New York World's Fair was shown on TV.

6) Which of the following participated in a television debate in 1960?

A: Kennedy and Johnson **B:** Reagan and Clinton **C:** Kennedy and Nixon **D:** Nixon and Bush

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