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Level 4 – 26th February 2024

Decimal point 150 years older than thought

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<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2402/240226-decimal-point-4.html>

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Please try Levels 5 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2402/240226-decimal-point-4.html>

Newly-found documents are exciting mathematicians worldwide. The records of an Italian merchant and astronomer from the 1440s show a decimal point. This find is significant because it means the decimal point is 150 years older than we previously thought. The merchant made many observations of the heavens. He also wrote horoscopes. A mathematician noticed the decimal point in one of the merchant's works on astronomy.

Decimal points are an important part of life today. Some versions of decimals did exist 1,000 years ago. One form was used in the Islamic world in the 900s. It is likely the merchant travelled to the Middle East and learnt from scholars there. Intellectuals in China also used a version in the 1200s. The previous earliest known use of the decimal point was in 1593. A German astronomer used a system of decimals in his study of space.

Sources: <https://phys.org/news/2024-02-decimal-centuries-older-historians-thought.html>
<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/technology/history-of-math-shaken-up-as-fundamental-point-150-years-older-than-thought/ar-BB1iFllb>
<https://www.livescience.com/physics-mathematics/mathematics/worlds-oldest-known-decimal-point-discovered-in-merchants-notes-from-1440s-italy>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2402/240226-decimal-point-4.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Newly-found | a. the decimal point |
| 2. exciting mathematicians | b. the 1440s |
| 3. The records of an | c. worldwide |
| 4. from | d. of the heavens |
| 5. 150 years older than | e. on astronomy |
| 6. many observations | f. documents |
| 7. A mathematician noticed | g. we previously thought |
| 8. one of the merchant's works | h. Italian merchant |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Decimal points are an important | a. in the Islamic world |
| 2. Some versions of decimals | b. decimals |
| 3. One form was used | c. scholars |
| 4. It is likely the merchant | d. of space |
| 5. learnt from | e. also used a version |
| 6. Intellectuals in China | f. did exist |
| 7. used a system of | g. part of life |
| 8. in his study | h. travelled |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2402/240226-decimal-point-4.html>

Newly-(1) _____ exciting mathematicians worldwide.

The records of an Italian (2) _____ from the 1440s

show a decimal point. This find (3) _____ it means the

decimal point is 150 years older than (4) _____. The

merchant made many observations (5) _____. He also

wrote horoscopes. A mathematician noticed the decimal point in one of the

merchant's (6) _____.

Decimal points (7) _____ part of life today. Some

versions of (8) _____ 1,000 years ago. One form was

used in the Islamic world in the 900s. It is (9) _____

travelled to the Middle East and (10) _____ there.

Intellectuals in China also used a version in the 1200s. The

(11) _____ use of the decimal point was in 1593. A

German astronomer used a system of decimals in his

(12) _____.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2402/240226-decimal-point-4.html>

Newly-found documents are exciting mathematicians worldwide. The records of an Italian merchant and astronomer from the 1440s show a decimal point. This find is significant because it means the decimal point is 150 years older than we previously thought. The merchant made many observations of the heavens. He also wrote horoscopes. A mathematician noticed the decimal point in one of the merchant's works on astronomy. Decimal points are an important part of life today. Some versions of decimals did exist 1,000 years ago. One form was used in the Islamic world in the 900s. It is likely the merchant travelled to the Middle East and learnt from scholars there. Intellectuals in China also used a version in the 1200s. The previous earliest known use of the decimal point was in 1593. A German astronomer used a system of decimals in his study of space.

DECIMAL POINTS SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2402/240226-decimal-point-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about decimal points in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

WRITING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2402/240226-decimal-point-4.html>

Write about **decimal points** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner's paper.
