Young Inventors: Jack Andraka

Jack Andraka is a 16 year old who is changing the world. How is he doing that? He’s helping doctors identify, or diagnose, diseases. He recently invented a way to test for cancer.

Jack understands that the human body is made up of billions of cells, or the units that create life. Our cells are constantly replacing cells that have died. This keeps our body healthy.

But sometimes cells reproduce when they shouldn’t. This is one thing that cancer cells do: They multiply quickly and crowd out healthy cells. There are hundreds of types of cancer. Some are more common and more dangerous than others.

Jack became interested in how cancer is diagnosed after his family lost a close friend to the disease. He focused on pancreatic cancer, which is one of the deadliest types of cancer. One reason it’s so deadly is that doctors can’t identify it when it first appears. Another reason is that tests to find the disease cost a lot of money.

Jack’s test fixes both of these problems. It can accurately identify cancer cells, and it costs only about three cents a test.

Jack thinks that his test could change how cancer and other diseases are found. Because it uses only a drop of blood and a special paper, testing could be done in any doctor’s office. He hopes that his findings could also be used to detect other diseases early, when they are easiest to cure.

Jack’s discovery has changed his life. He has won more than $100,000 and has spoken at conferences. In addition, he has started his own company and is patenting his invention. Jack believes that his invention will be used in hospitals around the country within the next 10 years. He also hopes that people may live longer because their cancer is found early, when it’s easiest to cure.
Name _______________________

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Write all these words in the right places to complete this puzzle, which tells how one young person’s invention is helping save lives. You can reread the article before you begin, but don’t look back at it while you are working. After you’ve completed the puzzle, read it to someone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>appears</th>
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<td>money</td>
<td>test</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>100,000</td>
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Many people think inventors have to be adults, but Jack Andraka was only ________________ years old when he invented something important.

Cancer is a terrible ___________________________ that kills many people every year. If cancer is diagnosed when it first ___________________________, though, people can often be cured. Pancreatic cancer is a type of cancer that is deadly because there is not a good ___________________________ to tell when people have it.

Tests for cancer often cost a lot of ___________________________, but Jack invented a test that uses only one ___________________________ of blood and only costs three ___________________________.

Jack’s discovery is changing the lives of many people and has changed his ________________, too. His invention won more that ___________________________ dollars in prize money! Jack hopes that his invention will soon be used in ___________________________ all over the country and will save many lives.
Review
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Write keywords or phrases that will help you remember what you learned.