

The Secret Subway

There is a network of underground trains in New York City. It is called the subway. The subway can get you almost anywhere you want to go.

The modern subway opened in 1940. But it was not the first subway in the city. Alfred Beach built a secret subway in 1870.

Alfred dug a tunnel underground. He set up a giant fan. The fan moved a train back and forth through the tunnel.

The person in charge of transportation made a lot of money from the traffic above ground. He did not want the subway to exist. That's why Alfred had to build it in secret.

He dug the tunnel in the middle of the night. He bought a building to just to hide the dirt. It was a lot of work. But when it was done it was a big success.

Alfred made a special room for people to sit in while they waited for the train. It had fancy lamps and chairs. It had statues and a piano. It even had a goldfish pond.

The first year it was open, the secret subway had 400,000 passengers. But the person in charge of transportation found out about it. He shut it down after only three years.



Alfred's tunnel was sealed. It wasn't open again until 1912. Workers found remains of the old train. They also found a shield that Alfred used while digging. And they found the piano from the waiting room.

It would be many years until the modern subway was built. But we can thank Alfred for showing us the way.



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. When did Alfred build the secret subway?
 - a. 1940
 - b. 1912
 - c. 1870
 - d. 1904

2. What moved the train through the tunnel?
 - a. A horse
 - b. A motor
 - c. A fan
 - d. A person

3. Why did Alfred buy a building?
 - a. To live in
 - b. To hide the dirt
 - c. To make a waiting room
 - d. To sell

4. What did they find from the waiting room when they opened the tunnel?
 - a. Piano
 - b. Goldfish
 - c. Chairs
 - d. Lamps

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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