

1/MOTHER: I am so angry! I can't believe that teacher called you "addled." I'm going to tell him what I think of his teaching. You are a bright boy, Thomas Alva Edison. That teacher just doesn't know how to teach you!

2/EDISON: I've only been to school three months, mother, but I hate it.

1/MOTHER: Three months is long enough! I am a teacher. I'll teach you myself, and you'll learn year-round, no summer or holiday breaks.

2/EDISON: The conductor let me set up a laboratory in one of the railroad cars. I can use it when I'm not selling candy and papers. I'm also learning to operate the telegraph.

1/MOTHER: I'm sorry you had to start working at twelve, but we do need the extra money. Are you still studying?

2/EDISON: I keep up with my reading. I've read every single book in the Detroit library during my free time between trains.

1/MOTHER: I still get mad when I think of that teacher who said you couldn't learn.

3/NARRATOR: The first invention to earn Edison a large sum of money was a universal printer which controlled errors in stock tickers. Edison never dreamed what the invention would be worth.

2/EDISON: I was hoping for \$5,000, but expecting \$3,000 for that invention. I told the president of the company to make me an offer.

- 3/NARRATOR:** Although Edison was nearly deaf from the age of twelve, he heard clearly what the president said.
- 2/EDISON:** He said, "How about \$40,000?" I nearly fainted. But, you know, I spent all that money in about a month to set up a proper shop with tools, chemicals, equipment, and a good staff.
- 4/PHONO WORKER:** I'm a phono worker on Edison's staff. You know, people call us the insomnia squad because we go for days and nights without sleep working on your projects.
- 2/EDISON:** Oh, loss of sleep never hurt anybody. I can curl up on the floor, catch a catnap, and be ready to work again. You people working with me love the excitement of making new things as much as I do.
- 4/PHONO WORKER:** We've always called you the "old man" even though you are much younger than most of us. Your wealth of ideas is amazing. You tell one group what you envision, set them to work, and then move to another group and another idea.
- 5/LIGHT WORKER:** Talking with him is difficult because of his deafness. Did you know he proposed to his wife in code? He taught her the telegraphic system, so they could communicate quietly.
- 6/PICTURE WORKER:** He says his deafness increases his powers of concentration. He concentrates so completely that he often forgets the time, the place, and once he even forgot his name. He had to stop someone in the street for that information.