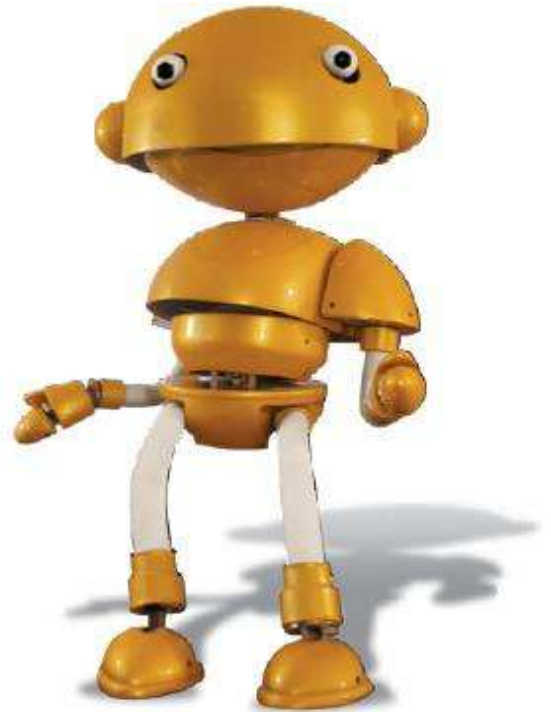


A robot at the Castle of Meung

Have you ever heard of
Walter ?

Walter is a little robot
who loves to have fun.

During your visit, he
thought it would be funny
if he were to leave some
random out of place
objects in some of the
rooms you will be going
through.



1

Let's see if you can find these objets...

Look around and find them !

Welcome to the castle of the bishops of Orléans !

You may have notice that the castle of Meung presents two different faces : that's why it's called "the castle with two faces"...

From the city side : A castle from the Middle Ages with a drawbridge tower.

From the park side: Thanks to King Louis XIV, the castle turned into a luxurious and cosy residence in 1706



Room n°6 : the guards room

Have you seen how high the ceiling in this room is? Impressive! It is a bit hard to get warm in here, with a 33 feet high ceiling, although a wood stove was installed in the 18th century.

During the Hundred Years war, the castle was a strategic center for the British army, in which armament and food were stored. When the leading English commander, the Earl of Salisbury was hit by a shot from a cannon at Orleans, he was transported to Meung and died of shock and gangrene eight days later... Nowadays, everything is quiet; the only purpose of this room is to welcome our guests and visitors!

Do you see the big switch? Press the button and you'll see on the walls the famous men and women who came here before you !



Room n°8 : the chapel

Have you often seen a round shaped chapel?

Look at these columns; they are more likely to be found in a Greek temple than in a chapel.

This chapel was built at the end of the 18th century. Pompeii had been rediscovered a few years prior to that by workmen digging for the foundations of a summer palace for the King of Naples. From then on, Roman style became very fashionable at that time.

In the middle of the floor, you can notice a star. For Christians, it refers to the star that guided the Three Wise men to Christ in Bethlehem. This chapel is dedicated to the Virgin Mary, but you can also see Saint Louis and Saint Teresa of Avila. A saint in the Christian religion is a kind of intermediary between God and men.



Room n°9 : the comedy Room

You are now in the comedy room.

What entertainment did people use to have?

In those times there was no television, no radio, no movies! If you liked theatre, you had to play your own plays, with your friends. Do you like music? Organise your own concerts?

Every child in the upper ranks of society knew how to play music, to draw, to dance... This was the hallmark of a good education.

Take a good look : what did Walter leave here, next to Moliere ?



Answer

A Pokemon card in the comedy room

Pokemon were invented by the Japanese Satoshi Tajiri around 1990 : the name comes from « pocket » and « monster ».

In his childhood, as he raised grasshoppers for racing, he noticed that older grasshoppers had more experience, and hence performed better, and were more valuable for transfer. Remembering this, he invented a universe full of small creatures fighting each other.

At first a board game, Pokemon became a card game in 1996. Since 2020, some cards became highly valuable : the « Pikachu Illustrator » from 1998 was recently bought for more than 5 millions euros !



Room n°10 : The liquor cabinet

After the French Revolution, the castle was bought by the founder of the National Bank.

After dinner, men (and men only!) used to spend their evenings in the smoking room or a room dedicated to consuming spirits, smoking, talking, and generally drinking alcohol. Nowadays, we all know that smoking isn't healthy, but in those times, it was chic. Gentlemen used to smoke "à l'anglaise"!

Sailors were the first Europeans to discover tobacco: it was very useful to fight against the smell of sweat, urine and dirt on boats. But boats then were made of wood, and smoking was dangerous. So strict rules were established: someone caught smoking on a boat could have their ear cut.

Nobles didn't smoke, but used to snort snuff.

Do you see this strange chair next to the table? It's a smoking chair : people used to sit astride and put their elbows on the back of the chair.



Room n°10 bis : The Ladies' room

Leaving the liquor cabinet, for men only, enter the ladies' room.

How did a lady spend her day in the 19th century ?

She has to support her husband : a wife has to complement her husband.

Consequently she takes over the house : dealing with any domestic problem, managing the house staff, supervising the children's education and setting an example by joining charity events. She also supports her husband by holding court, where she entertains friends or business relations. She also goes to society events, such as evening receptions, theater plays or Opera.

In any case, a well-behaved woman can't stay idle, because « idle hands are the devil's playground ». So, when one has a little free time, one can relax drawing, painting, embroidering...

7



Room n°11 : The medieval kitchen

In the beginning of the 14th century this room was the drawbridge entrance. Later on, it was used for the servants. We have laid the table: no knife, because everyone carried their own knife, no forks (usually, not before the 18th century), but spoons.

King Louis XIV used to eat with his fingers and no one was allowed to use a fork at his table. It didn't mean that the king was eating like a pig; people had an elegant way of carrying food from their plate to their mouth with their fingers or their knife.

On the right-hand side, there is a yoke to carry water buckets ... no tap water in those ancient times...

It's your turn to work... What did Walter leave here?



Answer

Candyfloss in the medieval kitchen

During the 15th century, Italians invented spun sugar (handmade) : the method was exceptionally tricky and the result was used to decorate and garnish food. Cotton candy, as we know it nowadays, was invented in the USA around 1890 by a confectioner (no surprise) and a... dentist, then president of the Dentists from Tennessee Association, in order to create a sweet with less sugar. To do so, both invented a machine to cook granulated sugar at 186°C ; the syrup is then projected through tiny holes, using centrifugal force, to create thousands of filaments hardening in the air. Cotton candy was born !

Known as « Tooth Floss » (not very sexy!) then « Fairy Floss », then « Candyfloss » or « Cotton Candy » in English-speaking countries, it was named « Barbe à Papa » (« Daddys'beard ») when it arrived in France in 1934...



Room n°14 : the herbalist's room

Our ancestors often used to prepare their own remedies using herbs.

Most people at the time believed in God and to cure themselves, they used a theory called the Doctrine of Signatures.

God created the world and the people to live in it. God is full of good will towards people and so he sent clues to man to help him look after himself.

For instance, he gave the walnut the shape of a brain. So for example if you have a headache, just eat walnuts and they should make you feel better!

Here is another example: carrot juice is yellow, so use it to cure? ... Jaundice!

Nowadays plants are still used in the composition of numerous remedies. For a long time, Aspirin was made from the bark of willows.



Room n°16 : the linen room

This is where the linen was kept, stored and mended.

This is an important place. There were no washing machines in those days and usually only two large washes were done per year! So you had to store a huge quantity of clothes, sets of sheets, tablecloths, napkins...to last six months...

Linen was used, reused and used some more until it was threadbare. Once the linen was definitely no longer fit for use, it was retrieved by the rag dealer who would resell it to make paper.

Oh ! Walter has left something else! Can you see it?



Answer

Electric iron in the laundry room

No electricity means no electric irons! It was eventually invented in 1882 by an American. It was a huge flop, as only a few homes had electricity at this time...

Electric iron spread in popularity only after WWI...



Room n°17 : the sickroom

During the winter, it was very cold in the castle. When people came back home, they didn't take off their coat. Instead, they put on a cap and fur jacket to protect themselves from the cold, like did the gentleman sitting near the window.

People used to put curtains to their beds and tapestries on the walls to avoid drafts. People took care to not become ill. At that time, a common cold could lead you to the grave, so you had to be strong to survive.

When people were ill, Doctors would prescribe purges, bloodlettings, enemas, and potions. They didn't know anything about antibiotics or germs. They wouldn't care about disinfecting. Many diseases were incurable.

The healthy ones were lucky!



Room n°18 : the stockroom

The stockroom is the place where everything required for everyday life in the castle was stored. In these cupboards you can see items used to keep people warm : bricks, hot water bottles, braziers, and what we call a "moine" ("monk" in english) which was used to heat and dry wet bed sheets.

There was no electricity in houses before the beginning of the 20th century, so people used candles, oil, or kerosene lamps.

Hygiene items are also stored here. There were very few bathrooms, people used to wash themselves in their own bedrooms.

At the bottom of the left cupboard is a table spittoon. At the time, spitting was normal and not considered impolite, but that didn't mean that one could spit anywhere !

Oh ! Walter has left something here...



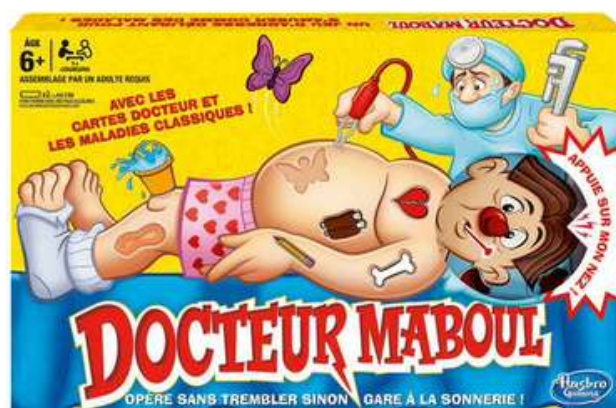
Answer

« Operation » in the store room.

In 1964, an American teacher asked his students to invent a game for children. John Spinello created then an electronic Mikado (pick-up-sticks), with an electric twist : players have to pull strange items out of the patient, Sam, without triggering the alarm sound. At first, the game was known as « Death Valley » but John quickly sold it to Marvin Glass, a game company, in exchange of 500 dollars and the promise of a job once he has graduated (never fulfilled). In 1965, renamed « Operation », the game came out, and sold over 45 million copies !

But... why those odd items ? Well, they are all related to expressions mentioning body parts, such as a butterfly for « butterflies in the stomach », an ice-cream for « brain freeze », a wrench for « wrenched ankle »...

In French, the game is known as « Docteur Maboul » (« Insane Doctor »).



Room n°19 : the attic

The attic is a privileged storage space.

The term attic or granary designates the place where grain was stored. Old-fashioned things that are no longer used, abandoned toys of children who have grown up are kept there.

Dirty laundry was also stored there while waiting for washing days.

As there were no washing machines of course in those times, doing the laundry lasted three days! On the first day, the more tenacious spots were removed. On the second day, the laundry was arranged in a vat with cinders (they contain potassium, a cleaning agent) then hot water was poured in the vat again and again for hours (and remember, no taps, you had to use a bucket!). On the third day, the laundry was carried to the river to be rinsed. And then it hung in the attic!



Room n°20 : Madame de Pilles' room

Here is a young lady's bedroom. Nowadays, you sleep in your bedroom, you play there sometimes... In the 18th century, people also ate, washed, and entertained their secretary, their fashion seller...

People used to wake up at around 8 o'clock. They had to pray (about 30 min.) before having breakfast.

Then it was time to have a wash: just rub the skin with a dry linen, cloth because water was considered dangerous for one's health. Even as late as the end of the 18th century, people still didn't own a bathtub, they used to hire one. On the other hand, people used (strong) perfumes and changed clothes several times a day! Appearance was very important!

It's afternoon now and it is time to leave the bedroom and let the servant tidy it up.

Can it be that Walter has left something a bit bizarre here ?



Answer

A pantyhose in Madame de Pilles' room

No panty hose in the 18th century ! Back in those days, only dancers wore panties, for modesty purposes... Other women wearing long skirts would wear only stockings made of wool, cotton or silk. But in the 1960s, skirts became miniskirts, very fashionable, and women exposed more of their legs : stockings only won't prevent from showing too much ! So panty hose were invented. Just one anecdote : one needs approximately 14km of thread to manufacture an adult size panty hose.



Room n°21 : Félix Le Coulteux's bedroom

Félix is a young 19th century gentleman, and he is a lieutenant on a ship (he has left his cocked hat). Every morning, Félix shaves in front of a barber's table which holds the shaving tools.

There is another strange piece of furniture in this bedroom. When the drawers are closed, it looks like a plain chest of drawers...

But the second drawer hides a chamber pot, and the third one contains a bidet (to wash people's bottoms!).

Look carefully, Walter has left something which has nothing to do with the 19th century !



Answer

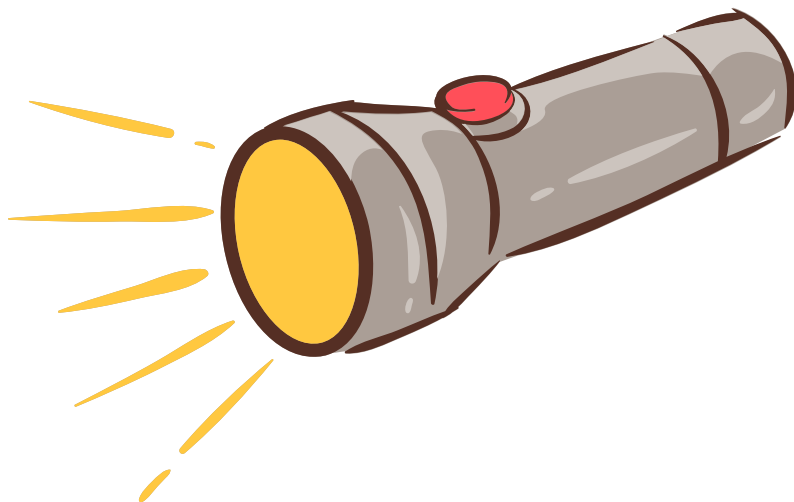
A flashlight in Felix's room

Hey, no flashlight in the 18th century : lighting is a real issue !

You may have seen in the storage room, candles and oil lamps : the main ways used for centuries to light the rooms...

Gas lamps only came in 1790, and spirit lamps in 1853.

Eventually, an American invented a pocket-size lamp, called « eveready ». Trouble is ? Back then, the batteries were weak and the lamp could only flash. Not very convenient ! Finally, Edison invented the incandescent light in 1878 : truly a revolution in daily life !



Room n°22 : the library

There were over 1 500 books in this library at the beginning of the 19th century. You could find various subjects here : philosophy, history, science, arts, literature, economy ...

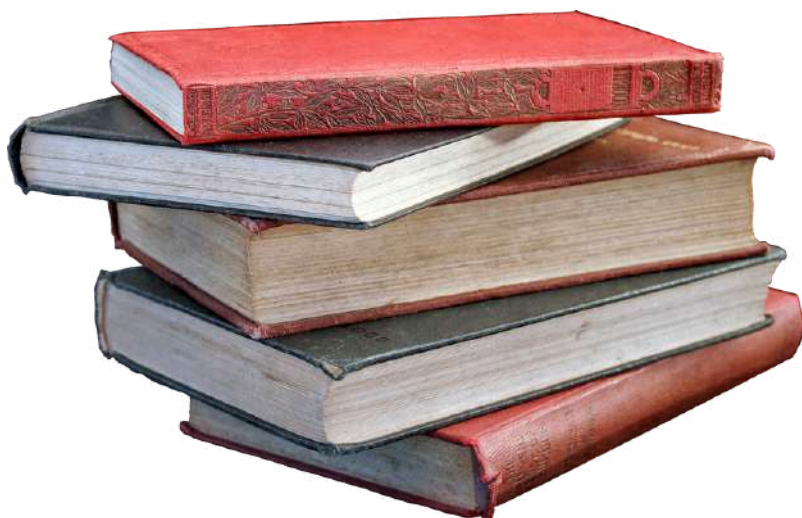
There is one for everyone's taste !

Look! On the mantelpiece of the fire place there is a strange thing, carrying a pineapple.

150 years ago, pineapples were very expensive and rare as they bruise and rot quickly. Some people thought it was utmost chic to have a pineapple at home, when they had guests at dinner.

So, they would rent a pineapple just for one evening and put it on this strange stand.

I think Walter has left something again!



Answer

A schoolbag in the library

Schoolbag is a rather recent invention ! In France, a few children went to school before Ferry's laws (1880), when school became public and free of charge for children from 6 to 13 years old. They used bags made of cloth. The wealthy ones didn't go to school and had private tutors at home.

When Education became mandatory, children needed something to carry books and meals : they used what they could, such as canvas or wood. Wooden boxes were carried on the shoulder : heavier, they could also be used as bench or desk, even as sled in the mountains ! Girls usually used a plain basket.



Room n°23 : the dining room

Look, the table has been laid
But where are the glasses?

Before the French Revolution (1789), glasses were not placed on the table, but in a glass holder filled with ice. When someone wanted to drink, a servant gave him a glass and put the emptied glass back into the glass holder.

People used the «French-style» service with different courses:

for instance, one for meat, one for soups, one for fruit... Each course included 3 to 15 dishes. You can imagine how long these meals took...



Room n°25 : the main kitchen

Here is the « heart » of Meung castle.

At the far end of the kitchen, there is a big chimney where an entire beast could be roast ! Rosting meat is a rich person's privilege : one needs a metallic spit and staff or mechanism to turn the spit... Poor persons can only afford to boil their meat !

On the left side, there is a strange object with 3 bells. Each of them has a different sound. These bells were connected with cords to the Lord and his family's rooms. That is how people used to call for their servants. The sound of each bell referred to one room in particular.

Look! What has Walter left?

Can you spot the object which shouldn't be here?



Answer

A hamburger in the main kitchen

In the German language, « hamburger » refers to people living in Hamburg.

Back in the 19th century, ships from the Hamburg-Amerika Linie company brought migrants from Eastern Europe to the US from Hamburg. Aboard, they served patties made of minced beef, onions, bread crumbs and salt (as preservative to the meat).

Once in New-York, some german migrants came with the idea of selling those « hamburg style cooked steaks », or « hamburgers » and opened some stalls. Nowadays, some people say that hamburgers were already served in between two slices of bread (in Germany, workers used brioche) while some others say that Louis Lassen, an american, was the first one to fill bread with a hamburger, in order to please a client who could not wait for lunch.



Room n°26 : the bathrooms

There has been running water on all floors of Meung Castle since the end of the 18th century; it was brought from the river below by a hydraulic machine.

It was a luxury at the time! Did you know that filling a simple bathtub took 40 to 60 buckets of water?

The water was heated in a furnace, located in the next room. When the water was getting cold or when one needed to rinse oneself, the servants used to carry water in copper pots.

Let's go to the room with the bathtubs, now...



Room n°27 : the bathtubs

You may have noticed that some sheets have been placed inside the bathtubs.

In ancient times, most of the bathtubs were made of wood by a cooper and the sheet prevented people from being injured by the splinters or from slipping in the bathtub.

This habit remained though the bathtubs made of metal became more the norm. Remember at the time, you had to fill your bathtub with buckets of water... So several people used the same bath, one after the other... Uggghhh! The sheet was changed in between two users and was used to trap the dirt from the person who had just bathed. Then a clean sheet was put in for the next person.

No one knows how many people bathed in the same water...



Room n°29 : the underground

You're about to go in the oldest part of the castle, that may once certainly have served as a prison because the Bishop had legal jurisdiction.

In the old time, confession was mandatory to sentence a suspect : torture could help. But as man of God, the bishop did not have the right to spill blood. So, at Meung, water torture was then the preferred means to obtain a confession. The interrogator made the criminal swallow liters of water, sometimes replaced by vinegar or salted water... Not very funny, isn't it?

People also used to store food and drinks in here : you're basically in the castle's fridge !

Above all, you are here on a dragon's land... a long time ago, legend says that St Liphard defeated a dragon here, burying it into the ground. Are you brave enough to go and meet it?

**Thank you for participation,
Have fun !**

