

## Ballpoint Pens cont.

### B. Reading

1. The ballpoint pen is an instrument for writing on paper. It has a small, round ball made of brass, steel, or tungsten at its tip. When in use, ink from a **cartridge** inside the pen flows down to its tip. As the ball **rotates**, it picks up ink and deposits it on the paper.
2. Laszlo and Georg Biro of Hungary designed the first commercial ballpoint pen in 1935. Laszlo, a journalist, was tired of working with messy pens and had noticed how newspaper ink dried very quickly and did not **smudge**. He decided to construct a pen, with Georg's help, that used this kind of ink. The amount of ink coming out of their pen was controlled by a tiny ball bearing at its tip.
3. When World War II broke out, the Biro brothers moved to Argentina. They found financial backers for their **invention** and, in 1943, established Biro Pens of Argentina to manufacture their pens. Their first design had problems, so the pen was redesigned. The redesigned pens sold quite well in Argentina, but they became **immensely popular** in other countries after British fighter-plane pilots used them during the war (the pens did not **leak** at high altitudes).
4. After the war, several American companies **also** began to make ballpoint pens. Soon the market was **flooded** with poor-quality pens, which often leaked or would not write at all. The American public became **frustrated** and stopped buying ballpoint pens. Then, in 1954, a US company called Parker Pens **devised** a much better ballpoint pen, and the public started buying the pens again.
5. In 1950, Bic, a French company, had also begun to **manufacture** improved ballpoint pens. Over the years, Bic bought many of its manufacturing **rivals** and was soon producing and selling more pens than any other company. Today, Bic produces billions of inexpensive but good-quality pens that are used throughout the world.

*"The pen is mightier than the sword."*

—Edward Bulwer-Lytton