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Pre-Intermediate Student’s Book

Life

2.8

More than one billion people in the world don’t have glasses but need them. These people live in parts of the world where there aren’t many opticians. For example, in parts of Africa there is only one optician per million people. But now, there is a scientist who has found a solution to the problem. Joshua Silver has invented glasses which don’t need an optician.

They look like a pair of normal glasses but there is a pump on each side with silicone oil. First, you turn a wheel which controls the pump. The pump pushes the silicone oil through the pipe and it moves into the lenses. The shape of the lens changes and you turn the wheel until you can see correctly.

Silver had the idea a few years ago and he did many experiments before he got it right. The first person who used the new glasses was a man in Ghana. The man made clothes but he had bad eyesight and found it difficult to work. But when the man put on the glasses he could start working again. Silver says, ‘I will not forget that moment’.

As a result, Silver started an organisation which is called the ‘Centre for Vision in the Developing World’. The glasses are cheap to produce and so far the organisation has worked in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe where over thirty thousand people now wear the glasses. Joshua hopes a billion people across the whole world will have them by 2020.