

# IDEA QUOTA

Over the course of his life, Thomas Edison was granted 1,093 patents ranging from everything from the lightbulb, to the typewriter, to a talking doll, to the motion picture camera.

One of the reasons why Edison was able to generate so many patents was due to the fact that he believed that in order to have a good idea you had to generate many ideas. In fact, he set an ambitious idea quota for himself: A minor invention every 10 days and a major invention every 6 months. When developing the light bulb, Edison went through 9,000 different prototypes until he landed on a working version.

## **DIRECTIONS:**

Organize students into small groups and explain to them that the goal of their brainstorming time will be to come up with as many ideas as possible. No judging at this time - any idea is a good idea, no matter how wacky or off the wall.

In order to help your students come up with as many ideas as possible and to stretch their thinking, give them an "idea quota" that they have to meet. Even better, see if they can come up with a crazy amount of ideas in a short amount of time. Have each student write down their ideas on a separate sticky note or piece of paper and place them into the center of the work space.

*100 ideas in 15 minutes? Good. 200 ideas in 10 minutes? Even better.*

## **If the students get stuck, try adding constraints:**

- How would your mother design it?
- What if you could only use the color orange in the solution?
- How would a first grader design it?

