JavaScript, a versatile and dynamic programming language, has revolutionized the web by enabling interactive and dynamic content. Developed over the years, it has grown from a simple scripting language to a powerful tool used by millions of developers worldwide. This paper explores the history of JavaScript, its inventors, major milestones, and the future prospects for this ubiquitous language.

* Who invented it? JavaScript was invented by Brendan Eich, a talented computer programmer who was working at Netscape Communications Corporation in 1995. Eich was tasked with creating a lightweight scripting language to enhance the web browsing experience and provide interactivity. [Source: Mozilla Developer Network (MDN) - JavaScript Introduction]
* When? What for? JavaScript was introduced in December 1995 and initially known as Mocha, later renamed to LiveScript, and finally settled on JavaScript. The language was designed to add interactivity to static HTML pages, allowing web developers to create dynamic elements, validate form data, and manipulate web content on the client-side. [Source: W3Schools - JavaScript History]
* How many versions have there been? When were they released? JavaScript has seen several versions since its inception, each bringing new features and improvements. The major versions include:

a) ECMAScript 1 (ES1): Released in June 1997, it was the first standardized version of JavaScript. b) ECMAScript 2 (ES2): Published in June 1998, it introduced minor changes and clarifications to the language. c) ECMAScript 3 (ES3): Released in December 1999, ES3 introduced significant enhancements, including regular expressions, try/catch exception handling, and more. d) ECMAScript 4 (ES4): Development of ES4 started but was eventually abandoned due to disagreements among browser vendors. e) ECMAScript 5 (ES5): Published in December 2009, ES5 brought notable improvements, such as strict mode, JSON support, and array methods. f) ECMAScript 6 (ES6) or ECMAScript 2015: Released in June 2015, ES6 introduced groundbreaking features like arrow functions, classes, modules, and promises. g) ECMAScript 2016 and onwards: Since ES6, JavaScript follows a yearly release cycle, introducing new features and enhancements regularly. [Source: MDN - JavaScript Versions and Release Dates]

* What version are we on now? As of my knowledge cutoff in September 2021, the latest standardized version of JavaScript is ECMAScript 2021 (ES2021), which was officially released in June 2021. It introduced features such as logical assignment operators, string methods, and more efficient promises. [Source: MDN - ECMAScript 2021]
* Prospects for JavaScript: JavaScript continues to dominate the web development landscape and is expanding its reach beyond the browser. With the rise of server-side JavaScript frameworks like Node.js, JavaScript can now be used for full-stack web development. Its versatility, vast ecosystem of libraries and frameworks, and extensive community support make it a robust choice for building web applications.