

Child workers in Factories

You are living in Britain at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. As we have seen the population of Britain is growing and people are moving from jobs in cottages and farms to jobs in towns working in big factories. These factories have been set up to use new machines to produce more goods for the growing number of people living in Britain.

As a Newspaper reporter it is going to be your job to investigate claims that these factories are using child workers. You also need to write a newspaper article on:

- 'The conditions in factories for Children'

Tasks

To help you with writing this report you will need to:

A) Look at the sources 1-5 below and consider what each source tells us about:

- The **Jobs** children did
- **Accidents** which often happened
- **Punishments** children faced
- The **Food** children were given
- The **Hours** children worked

B) Begin writing your newspaper article by thinking of a good heading and detailing what your investigation of the sources has found.

C) Prepare a list of questions for a factory owner. As part of the report you will also be able to interview a leading Factory Owner (The Teacher) about your findings



Source 1

Some children, called scavengers, had **Jobs** such as cleaning the machines while they were still working, which was very dangerous

Source 2

'There were terrible **accidents**. Sometimes the children's hands and arms were caught in the machinery; in many instances the muscles, and the skin is stripped down to the bone, and in some instances a finger or two might be lost.'

Comment from a Doctor in Manchester

Source 3

'I have seen the factory owner with a horse whip standing outside the mill. He **punished** the children who came late.

John Fairbrother, an overlooker, interviewed in 1819

Source 4

'Our common food was oatcake. It was thick and coarse. This was our breakfast and supper. Our dinner was potato pie with boiled bacon it, it tasted awful, but we were hungry enough to eat anything.'

Written by a child worker

Source 5

'Very often the children are woken at 4am. They work for 16 **hours**, with little breaks, until they go home at night to their parents'

Richard Oastler, interviewed in 1832

Child workers in factories

<i>Source 1:</i> Describe what you see in the picture.	
What Jobs did the children do?	
<i>Source 2:</i> What accidents does the source say happened?	
What does this say about the conditions the children worked in?	
<i>Source 3:</i> How were children punished?	
What words would you use to describe this? (E.g. cruel)	
<i>Source 4:</i> What food does the source say the children were given?	
Would this be enough for a whole days work? If not why?	
<i>Source 5:</i> How many hours were worked each day?	
What do you think about this?	

Tasks

A) Look at your findings and prepare a list of questions for a factory owner. As part of the report you will be able to interview a leading Factory Owner (The Teacher) about your findings

B) Begin writing your newspaper article by thinking of a good heading and detailing what your investigation of the sources has found.

Title

1st Paragraph

Our paper has looked at factory conditions and found out

2nd Paragraph

In an interview the factory owner said

Final Paragraph

In conclusion this paper thinks

CITY LIFE DURING THE MID 1800S

Task: Study the sources carefully and answer the questions that follow. Pay special attention to the number of marks for each question.

Source One: A cartoon drawn in the 1850s at the height of a cholera epidemic (from Punch Magazine)



Source Two: Taken from the internet site 'Victorian Web'; 2002

During the first decades of Victoria's reign, baths were virtually unknown in the poorer districts and uncommon anywhere. Most households of all economic classes still used "privy-pails"; water closets (flush toilets) were rare. Sewers had flat bottoms, and because drains were made out of stone, seepage was considerable. If, as was often the case in towns, streets were unpaved, they might remain ankle-deep in mud for weeks.

Source Three: 1850s cartoon; 'A Court for King Cholera' (From Punch Magazine)



Source Four: Henry Mayhew, 'Jounneys through London'; 1849

We then journeyed on to London Street, down which the tidal ditch continues its course. In No. 1 of this street the cholera first appeared seventeen years ago, and spread up it with fearful speed; but this year it appeared at the opposite end, and ran down it with like severity. As we passed along the reeking banks of the sewer the sun shone upon a narrow slip of the water. In the bright light it appeared the colour of strong green tea, and positively looked as solid as black marble in the shadow - indeed it was more like watery mud than muddy water; and yet we were assured this was the only water the wretched inhabitants had to drink.

As we gazed in horror at it, we saw drains and sewers emptying their filthy

contents into it; we saw a whole tier of doorless privies in the open road, common to men and women, built over it; we heard bucket after bucket of filthy splash into it, and the limbs of the vagrant boys bathing in it seemed by pure force of contrast, white as Parian marble.

In this wretched place we were taken to a house where an infant lay dead of the cholera. We asked if they really did drink the water? The answer was, "They were obliged to drink the ditch, without they could beg or thieve a pailful of water." But have you spoken to your landlord about having it laid on for you? "Yes, sir and he says he will do it, and do it, but we know him better than to believe him."

Source Five; Father Thames introducing his offspring (Diphtheria, Scrofula and Cholera); A cartoon published in 1858 (From Punch Magazine)



[If this image is unclear, use the following summary:

This shows a lady with a crown being introduced by a strange kind of man coming out of the river to three deformed creatures, looking horrific as they are pushed forward to greet the lady.]

Questions;

1. Study source one carefully

- What does it show? (3 marks)
- What is the message of the picture? (3 marks)
- Skeletons don't 'dispende' water. Therefore the source is useless to a historian of mid 1800s city life. Do you agree? (6 marks)

2. Read source two carefully

- Give three threats to health mentioned in the source (3 marks)

3. Study source three carefully.

- How can you tell that this 'court' is a very unhealthy place? (4 marks)
- Do you think this cartoon is likely to be reliable? Explain your answer. (6 marks)

4. Study source four carefully

- Do Henry Mayhew's comments back up the views of the cartoonist in source three? (7 marks)

5. Study source five carefully

- 'Dirty water certainly was the main cause of disease in the 1800s'. Do you agree? Explain with reference to any sources you wish and your own knowledge. (8 marks)

Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*

(1848)

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels are the founding fathers of so-called scientific socialism. Their pamphlet, The Communist Manifesto, and other writings by Marx, were a primary inspiration for the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the Chinese Communist Revolution of 1949, and other great upheavals.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels on the Class Nature of Society

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes....

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other—bourgeoisie and proletariat....

Modern industry has established the world market, for which the discovery of America paved the way. This market has given an immense development to commerce, to navigation, to communication by land....

Each step in the development of the bourgeoisie was accompanied by a corresponding political advance in that class. An oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility, an armed and self-governing association of medieval commune: here independent urban republic (as in Italy and Germany); there taxable "third estate" of the monarchy (as in France); afterward, in the period of manufacturing proper, serving either the semi-feudal or the absolute monarchy as a counterpoise against the nobility, and, in fact, cornerstone of the great monarchies in general—the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of Modern Industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative state, exclusive political sway. The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie....

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society....

The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere....

The bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilization. The cheap prices of commodities are the heavy artillery with which it forces the barbarians' intensely obstinate hatred of foreigners to capitulate. It compels all nations, on pain of extinction, to adopt the bourgeois mode of production; it compels them to introduce what it calls civilization into their midst, i.e., to become bourgeois themselves. In one word, it creates a world after its own image....

... Modern bourgeois society, with its relations of production, of exchange and of property, a society that has conjured up such gigantic means of production and of exchange, is like the sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells. [...] It is enough to mention the commercial crises that, by their periodical return, put the existence of the entire bourgeois society on its trial, each time more threateningly. In these crises, a great part not only of the existing products, but also of the previously created productive forces, are periodically destroyed. In these crises, there breaks out an epidemic that, in all earlier epochs, would have seemed an absurdity—the epidemic of over-production. Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of momentary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation, had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed. And why? Because there is too much civilization, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce....

The weapons with which the bourgeoisie felled feudalism to the ground are now turned against the bourgeoisie itself.

But not only has the bourgeoisie forged the weapons that bring death to itself; it has also called into existence the men who are to wield those weapons—the modern working class—the proletarians....

The proletariat goes through various stages of development. With its birth begins its struggle with the bourgeoisie. At first, the contest is carried on by individual laborers, then by the work of people of a factory, then by the operative of one trade, in one locality, against the individual bourgeois who directly exploits them. They direct their attacks not against the bourgeois condition of production, but against the instruments of production themselves; they destroy imported wares that compete with their labor,

they smash to pieces machinery, they set factories ablaze, they seek to restore by force the vanished status of the workman of the Middle Ages.

At this stage, the laborers still form an incoherent mass scattered over the whole country, and broken up by their mutual competition. If anywhere they unite to form more compact bodies, this is not yet the consequence of their own active union, but of the union of the bourgeoisie, which class, in order to attain its own political ends, is compelled to set the whole proletariat in motion, and is moreover yet, for a time, able to do so. At this stage, therefore, the proletarians do not fight their enemies, but the enemies of their enemies, the remnants of absolute monarchy, the landowners, the non-industrial bourgeois, the petty bourgeois. Thus, the whole historical movement is concentrated in the hands of the bourgeoisie; every victory so obtained is a victory for the bourgeoisie.

But with the development of industry, the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more. The various interests and conditions of life within the ranks of the proletariat are more and more equalized, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labor, and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crises, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating. The increasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious; the collisions between individual workmen and individual bourgeois take more and more the character of collisions between two classes. Thereupon, the workers begin to form combinations (trade unions) against the bourgeois; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provision beforehand for these occasional revolts. Here and there, the contest breaks out into riots....

Altogether, collisions between the classes of the old society further in many ways the course of development of the proletariat. The bourgeoisie finds itself involved in a constant battle. At first with the aristocracy; later on, with those portions of the bourgeoisie itself, whose interests have become antagonistic to the progress of industry; at all time with the bourgeoisie of foreign countries. In all these battles, it sees itself compelled to appeal to the proletariat, to ask for help, and thus to drag it into the political

arena. The bourgeoisie itself, therefore, supplies the proletariat with its own elements of political and general education, in other words, it furnishes the proletariat with weapons for fighting the bourgeoisie.

Further, as we have already seen, entire sections of the ruling class are, by the advance of industry, precipitated into the proletariat, or are at least threatened in their conditions of existence. These also supply the proletariat with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress.

Finally, in times when the class struggle nears the decisive hour, the progress of dissolution going on within the ruling class, in fact within the whole range of old society, assumes such a violent, glaring character, that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift, and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands. Just as, therefore, at an earlier period, a section of the nobility went over to the bourgeoisie, so now a portion of the bourgeoisie goes over to the proletariat, and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole.

Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a genuinely revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.

The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay, more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history. . . .

All the preceding classes that got the upper hand sought to fortify their already acquired status by subjecting society at large to their conditions of appropriation. The proletarians cannot become masters of the productive forces of society, except by abolishing their own previous mode of appropriation, and thereby also every other previous mode of appropriation. They have nothing of their own to secure and to fortify; their mission is to destroy all previous securities for, and insurances of, individual property.

All previous historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the immense majority, in the interest of the immense majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air. . . .

Hitherto, every form of society has been based, as we have already seen, on the antagonism of oppressing and oppressed classes. But in order to oppress a class, certain conditions must be assured to it under which it can, at least, continue its slavish existence. The serf, in the period of serfdom, raised himself to membership in the commune, just as the petty bourgeois, under the yoke of the feudal absolutism, managed to develop into a bourgeois. The modern laborer, on the contrary, instead of rising with the process of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes evident that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an overriding law. It is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to assure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state, that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeoisie, in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society.

The essential conditions for the existence and for the sway of the bourgeois class is the formation and augmentation of capital; the condition for capital is wage labor. Wage labor rests exclusively on competition between the laborers. The advance of industry, whose involuntary promoter is the bourgeoisie, replaces the isolation of the laborers, due to competition, by the revolutionary combination, due to association. The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable. *THE*

1. What parts of the document deal with what may be considered "colonialism" or "imperialism."

2. What do Marx and Engel feel makes the proletariat unlike any other class that has existed? - include evidence.

17 She has a world of ready wealth,
18 Our minds and hearts to bless—
19 Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
20 Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

25 Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
26 Our meddling intellect
27 Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—
28 We murder to dissect.

21 One impulse from a vernal wood
22 May teach you more of man,
23 Of moral evil and of good,
24 Than all the sages can.

29 Enough of Science and of Art;
30 Close up those barren leaves;
31 Come forth, and bring with you a heart
32 That watches and receives. ~~277~~

1. In one or two sentences, summarise in plain English the rough meaning of Whitman's poem.

2. Why do you think Whitman used an astronomer, rather than, say, a civil engineer or chemist, to make his point?

Romantic Responses to the Modern World: Walt Whitman's "When I Heard the Learned Astronomer" and William Wordsworth's "The Tables Turned"

The following two poems—one by the English Romantic poet William Wordsworth (1770–1850), the other by the American poet and essayist Walt Whitman (1819–1891)—though written on different continents and decades apart, express similarly “Romantic” ideals.

When I Heard the Learned Astronomer

Walt Whitman

When I heard the learn'd astronomer,
When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in
columns before me,
When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to
add, divide, and measure them,
When I sitting heard the astronomer where he
lectured with much applause in the lecture-
room,
How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,
Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,
In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to
time,
Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.

The Tables Turned

William Wordsworth

1 Up! up! my Friend, and quit your books;
2 Or surely you'll grow double:
3 Up! up! my Friend, and clear your looks;
4 Why all this toil and trouble?
5 The sun above the mountain's head,
6 A freshening lustre mellow
7 Through all the long green fields has spread,
8 His first sweet evening yellow.
9 Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
10 Come, hear the woodland linnet,
11 How sweet his music! on my life,
12 There's more of wisdom in it.
13 And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
14 He, too, is no mean preacher:
15 Come forth into the light of things,
16 Let Nature be your teacher.

Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*

(1854)

Hard Times is one of the best and most well-known literary critiques of early industrialism. The following segment contrasts the fictitious industrial city of Coketown with the surrounding countryside.

It was a town of red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it; but as matters stood it was a town of unnatural red and black like the painted face of a savage. It was a town of machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever, and never got uncoiled. It had a black canal in it, and a river that ran purple with ill-smelling dye, and vast piles of building full of windows where there was a rattling and a trembling all day long, and where the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness. It contained several large streets all very like one another, and many small streets still more like one another, inhabited by people equally like one another, who all went in and out at the same hours, with the same sound upon the same pavements, to do the same work, and to whom every day was the same as yesterday and tomorrow, and every year the counterpart of the last and the next. . . .

In the hardest working part of Coketown, in the innermost fortifications of that ugly citadel, where Nature was as strongly bricked out as killing airs and gases were bricked in; at the heart of the labyrinth of narrow courts upon courts, and close streets upon streets, which had come into existence piecemeal, every piece in a violent hurry for some one man's purpose, and the whole an unnatural family, shoudering, and trampling, and pressing one another to

death, in the last close nook of this great exhausted receiver, where the chimneys, for want of air to make a draught, were built in an immense variety of stunted and crooked shapes, as though every house put out a sign of the kind of people who might be expected to be born in it; among the multitude of Coketown, generically called 'the Hands,'—a race who would have found more favour with some people, if Providence had seen fit to make them only hands, or, like the lower creatures of the seashore, only hands and stomachs—lived a certain Stephen Blackpool, forty years of age. . . .

As Coketown cast ashes not only on its own head but on the neighbourhood's too—after the manner of those pious persons who do penance for their own sins by putting other people into sackcloth—it was customary for those who now and then thirsted for a draught of pure air, which is not absolutely the most wicked among the vanities of life, to get a few miles away by the railroad, and then begin their walk, or their lounge in the fields. . . .

Though the green landscape was blotted here and there with heaps of coal, it was green elsewhere, and there were trees to see, and there were larks singing (though it was Sunday), and there were pleasant scents in the air, and all was over-arched by a bright blue sky. In the distance one way, Coketown showed as a black mist; in another distance hills began to rise; in a third, there was a faint change in the light of the horizon where it shone upon the far-off sea. Under

their feet, the grass was fresh; beautiful shadows of branches flickered upon it, and speckled it; hedge-rows were luxuriant; everything was at peace. Engines at pits' mouths, and lean old horses that had worn

the circle of their daily labour into the ground, were alike quiet; wheels had ceased for a short space to turn; and the great wheel of earth seemed to revolve without the shocks and noises of another time. ~~the~~

1. What aspect of life in Coketown does Dickens seem most critical of? Underline the passage that supports your answer.

2. What kinds of industry can one infer must have existed in Coketown? Just as many as you can and indicate where the evidence for them can be found in the document.