

History  
Children at work  
Book: How life changed in Victorian times  
Pages 8-17

Students: Fill in the answers and return for assessment

Everything here is based on our Curriculum Visions book How life changed in Victorian times.

In this segment, we are going to learn about what life was like for poor Victorian children who worked, and how conditions for these children gradually improved.

You will need to go to pages 8-9 of the book.

Part 1

Why did factories employ children?  
What kind of jobs did they do? Give two examples.

Answer ...

Children worked cheaply; they are small so can get to places adults cannot.  
Examples of jobs include: pulling trucks in narrow coal mines, picking up scraps from the factory floor, stoking fires in boilers, rethreading mill machines, etc.

You will need to go to pages 10-11 of the book.

Part 2

What would happen if a Victorian child refused to work?  
Do you think children were better off in a factory, a workhouse or the countryside?  
Explain your answer.

Answer ...

Their family might go hungry and other children would take their place; they could end up in the workhouse.  
Students' own answer.

Now turn to pages 12-15 of the book.

Part 3

What did Robert Owen think would happen if children in factories were treated better?

Who are two other people who helped to highlight the life of children in factories or to improve the lot of poor children?

Answer ...

He thought they would do just as much work and the mill would not lose money. Answers include any two of: Frances Trollope, Charles Dickens, Dr Thomas John Barnardo, government commission on child labour.

#### Part 4

Fill in the chart with the effects of the following acts, the first one has been filled in for you:

Act	Who did the Act apply to?	What was in the Act?
1833 Act of Parliament	People under the age of 18 working in mills and factories.	No person under the age of 18 could be employed in a mill or factory for more than 12 hours a day or 69 hours a week; 1.5 hour meal break each day
1842 Mines Act		
1844 Factory Act		
1970 Education Act		

Answer ...

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1842 Mines Act	Mines	It became illegal for children under 10 to work underground in mines
1844 Factory Act	Factories	It became illegal to employ children between 8 and 13 to work for more than 6.5 hours a day.

1870 Education Act	All children	Set up free schools for children
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Now turn to pages 16-17 of the book.

## Part 5

Children became healthier during Victorian times. What are three reasons why this happened?

What is one way in which the ideas about the spread of disease changed during Victorian times?

Answer ...

New discoveries on how to prevent disease; political and popular campaigns for shorter work hours and better conditions; engineers learned how to provide clean drinking water.

Answer could include any of: that disease could be reduced by cleanliness/using antiseptics; piping away dirty water can carry disease (bacteria) away; an understanding of how disease can spread in polluted water; vaccines can stop the spread of disease.

That is the end of this worksheet, and you can now turn to another one. Also, find out if your teacher has left you any other worksheets or special instructions on your school website.

If you are interested in this topic, continue to browse the book and watch our amazing videos. They start right on the book cover. Or you may want to go and hear the Victorians in action by visiting our 'fly on the wall' Eavesdrop section. You can hear what Victorians were actually saying. Just use our safe search and search 'Eavesdrop'.

Or you may want to see related books. If so just go to the top of the screen, select history, and from the page that opens choose How life changed in Victorian times.