

Year 7: How did people's lives change during the Industrial Revolution?

This unit will focus on the story of the Industrial Revolution. You will explore how and why the Industrial revolution occurred, as well as evaluating the impact it had on life in Britain.

Key words and definitions

Industrial Revolution	a huge change in how people produced goods - from working at home to working in factories
textiles	cloth production
mill	a factory
council	a group of people elected to run local government
empire	a group of countries ruled over by one
industrialisation	growth of factories and cities
merchants	traders
socialist	someone who believes that wealth should be shared more equally
terraced	a row of houses joined end to end
privy	an outside toilet
Tuberculosis, typhus and cholera	killer diseases from the industrial era
workhouses	place where poor people were given food and shelter in return for work
trade union	a group of people who join together to improve their pay or working conditions
Act	a new law passed by Parliament
pauper	a poor person
urban	towns or cities

Population change: the population of Britain went from 9.2 million people in 1701 to 27.4 million by 1851 and reached 41.5 million people by 1901.

The Industrial Revolution - consequences

At the same time the population was increasing, there was a move from the countryside to the towns. The fast-developing iron, coal and textile industries were creating new work and the towns and cities began to grow.

Why were cities so unhealthy?

Houses were built close together. They were small, cheap and nasty. Damp was normal.

The poorest people lived in cellars which were dirty and wet. Animals were common here.

There were very few homes with piped water. Water from a standpipe was often dirty and carried germs.



Privies were shared between several families. Human waste collected in cesspits which often overflowed.

Working class men did not have the right to vote until 1884. This meant that a lot of their complaints were ignored because Members of Parliament did not need to listen to them. But, working class people formed trade unions and protest groups so the government had to listen.

Manufacturing before the 1800s

Most women completed textile work from home (domestic system) and sold their products in markets. During this time, Britain was the leading wool producer within Europe; this allowed them to sell products around the world, to countries such as America and India.

From around 1700, machinery became well-developed too. This made it easier to produce products on a large scale, at a faster rate and this became known as the 'factory system.' This led to the period becoming known as the Industrial Revolution

Workers in the Industrial Revolution

Women and children were employed to work in factories. Many women worked in textile factories as they began to grow and expand throughout this period. Younger women could now have more independence as they could provide for themselves but married women would be forced to leave their children in the care of family members.

Children worked for cheap wages. Their small hands meant that they could easily work the machinery, but they were forced to complete dangerous work that caused health problems. They worked long hours for very little pay and they were often whipped if they did not work fast or to a high enough standard.



Public health during the Industrial Revolution

Industrial towns, such as Birmingham and Manchester, grew rapidly without town planning and were overcrowded.

There were no regulations about the basic standards for housing, sewerage and the water supply. In the slum areas of cities, diseases such as cholera, tuberculosis, typhus and diphtheria were endemic (always present in the population).

- **Cholera:** Cholera is a bacterial infection caused by contaminated food or water. It caused vomiting and diarrhoea and could result in death within a matter of hours.
- **Typhus:** This is another bacterial infection caused by contaminated food or water. In the 19th century, it was caused by poor sanitation and lack of cleanliness, e.g. not washing hands and clothes. Like Cholera, it was fatal but it developed more slowly.
- **Diphtheria:** Diphtheria is a bacterial infection that affects the respiratory system, making it hard to breathe. Increasingly crowded town and cities meant that the disease spread quickly and it became one of the major causes of death during this period.
- **Tuberculosis:** One in four deaths was caused by Tuberculosis (TB) in the early 19th century. As living and working conditions improved, the rate of the disease steadily declined. However, it remained a disease that mostly affected poorer people.