

The Industrial Revolution

'It was the best of times, it was the worst of times'
Charles Dickens

The Industrial Revolution was a **period from the 18th to the 19th century of great changes** in agriculture, manufacturing, mining, transportation, and technology. These changes had a deep effect on the socioeconomic and cultural conditions of the times. It began in the United Kingdom, then subsequently spread throughout Europe, North America, and the world.

The Industrial Revolution had a lot of **effects on English society**: the steam engine produced goods more cheaply than the traditional handworkers who had to move from the country to the new industrial cities and work in factories there. But the conditions in the cities were terrible: smoke from the factories, bad housing, no sanitation, and long working hours for little or no salary.

The workers lived in **SHALLOWS**, where moral and social evils of alcoholism, prostitution and criminality involved men, women and children. Above all children and women worked in factories where the introduction of machinery made useless the muscular strength.

In this way in the society the contrast between the high middle-class and the workers went up. **Capital**, that is money invested in business, became all-important.

Victorian writers (Charles Dickens) identified themselves with their age and were its spokesmen. They were very interested in moral problems because they lived in a period of deep social changes. They didn't agree with industrial revolution and its consequences but they, however, decided to write about it. In this period there was the growth of **NOVEL**, which reflected social changes such as the industrial revolution, the struggle for democracy and the growth of towns.

A1. The Industrial Revolution

	T	F
A) started in Great Britain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B) influenced society	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C) developed all over the world	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D) did not affect the cultural conditions of the 18 th and 19 th centuries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

A2. Why were handworkers forced to move from the country to the city?

- A) Because they had to work in factories
- B) Because the steam engine was expensive
- C) Because living in the country was expensive
- D) Because living in the new industrial cities was expensive

A3. Life in the new industrial cities was

- A) awful
- B) great
- C) not hard
- D) bearable

A4. Handworkers had to

T F

- A) work a lot
- B) smoke in factories
- C) live in healthy conditions
- D) work for little pay

A5. What does the term 'shallows' refer to?

- A) houses
- B) slums
- C) skyscrapers
- D) cottages

A6. Especially children and women worked in factories

- A) as men were criminals
- B) because they preferred machines
- C) as men were unnecessary
- D) because they were useless

A7. Charles Dickens was a

- A) journalist
- B) creative writer
- C) realistic writer
- D) poet

A8. Victorian novelists ...

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- A) idealized industrial revolution

- B) believed they had to talk about their society
- C) realized they lived in a period of small social changes
- D) decided to write about their times

A9. A novel is

- A) a detailed description or account of someone's life
- B) a book about the life of a person, written by that person
- C) a book of long narrative in literary prose
- D) a romance

A10. What do you think the text comes from?

- A) A novel
- B) A magazine or newspaper
- C) A letter or email
- D) A textbook

A11. When did the industrial revolution take place?

A12. Where did it begin?

A13. Did it have any effects on society?

A14. What happened to the English handworkers?

A15. What happened in the new industrial cities?

A16. Did children and women work in factories? Why?

A17. What was Victorian writers' attitude towards industrial revolution?

A18. Which were the main themes of the Novel?
