

Child Workers in the Factories

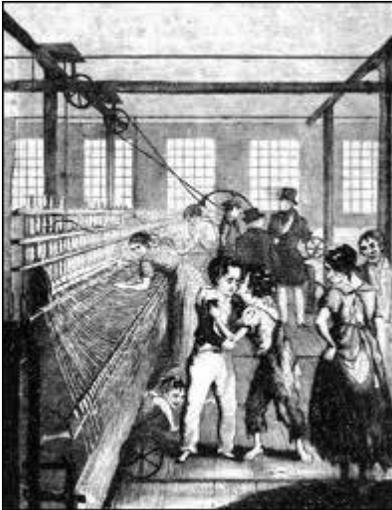
You are a newspaper reporter living in Britain at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. As we have seen, the population of Britain is growing and people are moving from jobs in cottages and farms to jobs in towns working in big factories. These factories have been set up to use new machines to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

As a newspaper reporter, it is your job to investigate rumours that these factories are using child workers.

Step 1: Look at sources 1-5 below and fill in the chart on the back of this page to learn about:

- The **jobs** that the children did in factories
- The **accidents** which often happened
- The **punishments** that children faced
- The **food** children were given
- The **hours** children worked

Source 1 (photo): Some children, called scavengers, had **jobs** such as cleaning the machines as 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 course. This was our breakfast and supper. Our dinner was potato pie with boiled bacon. 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

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| <p><i>Source 1:</i></p> <p>Describe what you see in this picture</p> <p>What jobs did the children do?</p> | |
| <p><i>Source 2:</i></p> <p>What accidents does the source say happened?</p> <p>What does this say about the working conditions for the children?</p> | |
| <p><i>Source 3:</i></p> <p>How were the children punished?</p> <p>What words would you use to describe this? (ex: cruel)</p> | |
| <p><i>Source 4:</i></p> <p>What food does the source say the children were given to eat?</p> <p>Would this be enough food for a whole day's work?</p> | |
| <p><i>Source 5:</i></p> <p>How many hours did the children work each day?</p> <p>What do you think about this?</p> | |