

Year 8: The Development of Britain in the Victorian Period

The Industrial Revolution

Factory working conditions

Long working hours: normal shifts were usually 12-14 hours a day, with extra time required during busy periods.

Low wages: a typical wage for male workers was about 15 shillings (75p) a week, but women and children were paid much less, with children three shillings (15p). For this reason, employers preferred to employ women and children.

Cruel discipline: there was frequent "strapping" (hitting with a leather strap). Other punishments included nailing children's ears to the table, and dousing them in water butts to keep them awake.

Accidents: forcing children to crawl into dangerous, unguarded machinery led to many accidents and deaths.

Health: The air was full of dust, which led to chest and lung diseases and loud noise made by machines damaged workers' hearing.

Living conditions

Overcrowding: due to large numbers of people moving to the cities, there were not enough houses for all these people to live in.

Disease: typhus, typhoid, tuberculosis and cholera all existed in the cities of England. Overcrowding, low standard housing and poor quality water supplies all helped spread disease.

Waste disposal: gutters were filled with litter. Human waste was discharged directly into the sewers, which flowed straight into rivers.

Poor quality housing: houses were built very close together so there was little light or fresh air inside them. They did not have running water and people found it difficult to keep clean.

Lack of fresh water: people could get water from a variety of places, such as streams, wells and stand pipes, but this water was often polluted by human waste.

From 1750 Britain went through a process of change in a number of key areas:

- **Agriculture** - New tools, fertilizers and harvesting techniques were introduced, resulting in increased productivity and agricultural prosperity.
- **Industry** - factories sprung up all over the country creating more efficient ways to produce goods such as wool, cotton and coal. The increase in factories brought thousands of new jobs.
- **Transport and communications** - Thomas Telford built roads and canals in the 1700s and George Stephenson and Isambard Kingdom Brunel oversaw the 'Railway Mania' of the 1800s. There had previously been no very fast way of transporting goods and people around the country.
- **Technology** - There were also many scientific discoveries and technological inventions that changed society and industry. Changes to sanitation and medical treatment such as the work of John Snow and Edward Jenner improved people's quality of life.

Jack the Ripper

Victims

Mary Anne Nichols: 42 Years old. 5 children. Separated from her husband

Annie Chapman: Mother of a disabled son. Had brain and lung disease

Elizabeth Stride: 44 years old. Married a carpenter and had 8 convictions for drunkenness

Catherine Eddowes: Mother of 3. Separated from her husband following troubles with alcohol

Mary Jane Kelly: 25 years old. Born in Ireland, moved to London

Suspects

Michael Ostrog Russian doctor. Convicted of violent crimes

James Maybrick Confessed to being Jack the Ripper in his diary.

Aaron Kosminski Identified by eyewitness as near the site of a double murder but only 2 years after the event

John Druitt his brother told police he was probably Jack the Ripper. No one else in his family agreed



Why was Jack the Ripper never caught?

Police: Low paid job, many were drunks and inexperienced at dealing with crime. They cleared away crime scenes before evidence had been gathered to avoid scaring the public

Newspapers: They offered financial rewards to anyone who had information. This led to over 1,000 people coming forward claiming to be a witness. It was impossible to know if any were telling the truth

Vigilantes: Some groups tried to solve the crimes on their own and did not share their information with the police

Technology: The police used new technology, such as finger print technology. However, this was still not 100% accurate

Witnesses: The witnesses that came forward were unreliable. 2 witnesses gave completely different accounts of what Jack looked like.

The Slave Trade

The Triangular Trade



The Middle Passage



The Middle Passage refers to the part of the trade where **Africans**, densely packed onto ships, **were transported across the Atlantic to the West Indies**. The **voyage took 3 to 4 months** and, during this time, the enslaved people mostly lay chained in rows on the floor of the hold or on shelves that ran around the inside of the ships' hulls.

Life on the Plantation

Punishments

Punishment was cruel and **brutal** and **done in public**. Whipping was often used for minor incidents. Runaways were branded, whipped or had an ear cut off. The punishment for theft was to have limbs cut off and slow burning. Killing slaves was not viewed as murder.

Housing

Slaves had an area of the plantation where they lived. Some had to build their own houses. They often built homes like the houses they had had in Africa. Sometimes ten people shared a hut. There was not much space.

Food

They lived on a diet of **fatty meat and cornbread**.

Free time

Most slaves had to work from **sunrise to sunset** every day. Slaves were not allowed to read or write, but **some** were allowed to go to church.

The Abolition of the Slave Trade

Religion/Moral: William Wilberforce led the campaign to abolish slavery. He was a Quaker, who believed slavery was sinful and against Christian teaching.

Economic: It became clear to plantation owners that it was cheaper to employ ex-slaves as waged labourers than to own slaves who you had to house and feed.

Individuals: In 1789 former slave Olaudah Equiano wrote his life story. This was widely read and turned many people against slavery.

Slave resistance: In 1791 slaves on the West Indian island of St. Domingue rebelled, murdered, and burned down the sugar fields of their plantation owners.