

The Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution took place in Britain from the late 1700s to the late 1800s. It is named the Industrial Revolution because it was a time that many people in Britain stopped farming and started working in factories.

What Was Life like before the Industrial Revolution?



Before the Industrial Revolution, many people in Britain lived on farms. This was where they looked after animals and grew their own food.

The fastest way to get anywhere was by horse and cart and most people lived in small villages.



Crafts, such as making pots and cloth, were completed by hand.

What Made the Industrial Revolution so Successful?

There were lots of different things that happened in Britain during the Industrial Revolution. Because of this, historians believe that there are many different reasons for the Industrial Revolution being so successful.

Firstly, lots of new inventions were created which started to make life easier in Britain. One example of this is that James Watt perfected the design of the steam engine – a machine engine which used coal as a fuel. Before the steam engine, machines had relied on water power and could only be built in towns near a water source. Not having to worry about water meant that factories could now be built all over the country.

People started to build more canals, railways and roads. With new, faster steam trains, it was a lot easier and quicker to move around the country. By 1880, a trip from London to Manchester now took only four hours. In 1700, the same trip would have taken four days!



Important Inventions

As well as the steam engine, there were lots of other important inventions during the Industrial Revolution.

1764 - The spinning jenny was invented.

This was a machine that was much quicker than a person at turning cotton into cloth.

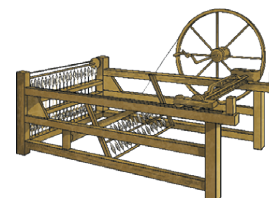
1863 - The first route on the London Underground was built.

1885 - Karl Benz invented the first motor car.



Did You Know...?

Nobody knows how the spinning jenny gained its name. Some people think that the word 'jenny' sounds a bit like the word 'engine'. Others think that Jenny might have been the name of the inventor's wife or daughter.



What Was Life like during the Industrial Revolution?

People's everyday lives changed during the Industrial Revolution. Before the steam engine, most goods were made by hand. Now, lots of things were being made by giant machines. As a result, many large factories were built and people started working in dirty, noisy and dangerous conditions. Even children as young as five years old were expected to work in the factories. Lots of people had moved into towns to work. This meant that towns were often really busy and would be filled with smoke. Factory owners built cheap houses which were often very close together and rarely had running water.

Rights for Child Workers

Young children who worked in factories often had to work in very dangerous conditions. Because of this, the government introduced a Factory Act in 1833. This meant that any child who worked in a factory had to be given two hours of schooling each day. It also stated that children under the age of nine were not allowed to work in factories.

By the late 1800s, lots of Britain's goods were now made in large factories. Soon, the invention of the telephone and other modern-day items would lead Britain into a technological revolution.

Questions

1. Who invented the first motor car? Tick one.

- James Watt
- Jenny
- Karl Benz
- Factory Act

2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they occurred.

- The government introduces the factory act.
- The fastest way to get around is by horse and cart.
- Getting from London to Manchester takes four hours.
- The first motorised car is invented.

3. Why could factories only be built near water before the invention of the steam engine?

4. Fill in the missing words.

Factories were built and people started working in _____ , _____
and _____ conditions.

5. Look at the section headed, **What Made the Industrial Revolution so Successful?**

Find and copy the phrase which tells you that James Watt didn't invent the steam engine by himself.

6. **Even children as young as five years old were expected to work in factories.**

Do you think that this was fair? Explain your answer.

7. **By 1880, a trip from London to Manchester now took only four hours.**

Why do you think that this was seen as a positive thing?

8. Would you like to have been alive during the Industrial Revolution?

Explain your answer.
