Industrial Revolution Worksheet

Grade 8 – 9 social studies · industry and reform



Name: Date: Score: / 26

Why everything changed at once

For most of history, goods were made by hand, in homes and small workshops, close to where they were used. Within a century that was no longer true of much of Europe and North America. The **Industrial Revolution** is the name for that shift.

The key was power that could be put anywhere. A water wheel tied a mill to a fast-flowing river. A **steam** engine burned coal, so a factory could be built wherever its owner chose — and owners chose to build where the coal was. Textiles mechanised first, then iron, then everything else.

People followed the work. Towns grew far faster than anyone could house them, and **urbanisation** brought overcrowding, filthy water and epidemics alongside the wages. Factory work itself was long, loud and dangerous, and a great deal of it was done by children. Both the **trade union** and the **Factory Acts** grew out of that, and neither came quickly.

Part A — Vocabulary match each term to its meaning (8 marks)

1. Industrial Revolution	_____	A. An organisation of workers acting together over pay and conditions
2. Urbanisation	_____	B. Money and equipment invested to produce goods
3. Mass production	_____	C. Laws limiting working hours and improving conditions
4. Capital	_____	D. The growth of towns and cities as people move in
5. Trade union	_____	E. The shift from making goods by hand to making them by machine
6. Factory Acts	_____	F. Making goods in quantity using standard parts
7. Sanitation	_____	G. Cloth and the industry that makes it
8. Textiles	_____	H. Systems for clean water and removing waste

Part B — Fill in the blanks (8 marks)

1. The Industrial Revolution began in _____ before spreading elsewhere.

2. The _____ engine freed factories from having to sit beside fast rivers.

3. _____ was the fuel that powered the engines and fired the furnaces.

4. The first industry to be mechanised was _____.

5. The movement of people from countryside to city is called _____.

6. Workers joined together in a trade _____ to bargain over pay.

7. Children were employed because they were cheap and _____.

8. Overcrowded cities suffered outbreaks of disease because of poor _____.

Part C — Benefit or cost? write benefit or cost beside each (6 marks)

Consequence	Benefit or cost
Goods became cheaper and more plentiful	
Air and rivers were badly polluted	
New jobs were created in towns	
Working hours were long and machines unguarded	
Travel became faster and cheaper by rail	
Housing was overcrowded with poor sanitation	

Part D — Read the testimony (4 marks)

EVIDENCE GIVEN TO A PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON CHILD LABOUR, 1832

I have been employed at the mill since I was eight years old. We begin at five in the morning and give over at nine at night. I have often been so tired I could hardly get home. My sister was caught in the machinery and lost three fingers.

— a mill worker, questioned about conditions

1. How many hours a day did this worker describe, and at what age did they start?

2. Why would a committee of lawmakers want to hear from workers themselves rather than only from mill owners?

Industrial Revolution Worksheet — Answer Key

Grade 8 – 9 social studies · industry and reform



Part A — Vocabulary

1. **Industrial Revolution** → E
2. **Urbanisation** → D
3. **Mass production** → F
4. **Capital** → B
5. **Trade union** → A
6. **Factory Acts** → C
7. **Sanitation** → H
8. **Textiles** → G

Part B — Fill in the blanks

1. **Britain**
2. **steam**
3. **Coal**
4. **textiles**
5. **urbanisation**
6. **union**
7. **small**
8. **sanitation**

Part C — Benefit or cost?

1. Goods became cheaper and more plentiful → **Benefit**
2. Air and rivers were badly polluted → **Cost**
3. New jobs were created in towns → **Benefit**
4. Working hours were long and machines unguarded → **Cost**
5. Travel became faster and cheaper by rail → **Benefit**
6. Housing was overcrowded with poor sanitation → **Cost**

Worth discussing: the benefits and the costs did not land on the same people. Cheaper goods and railway shares went largely to those who already had capital; the long hours, the bad water and the unguarded machines went to those who did not.

Part D — The testimony

1. **Sixteen hours a day, from five in the morning to nine at night, starting at the age of eight.**
2. **Owners had a direct interest in saying conditions were fine; workers knew what the hours and the machines were actually like.**
   Accept any answer noting that evidence from people with something to lose by telling the truth is weaker than evidence from those who experienced it. Testimony like this is what led to the Factory Acts.