

THE SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION READING GUIDE

DIRECTIONS: *Answer each of the questions with detail and specific examples from each text.*

A) Chapter 7.3 “The Social Impact of the Industrial Revolution” p. 254-258:

1. Explain what caused urbanization and what was life like in the new industrial cities?
2. Compare and contrast the new middle class and the industrial working class. How did the members of the working class react to their new experiences in the industrial cities?
3. How did working conditions in the factory differ from that of the farm? How did the Industrial Revolution affect the lives of men, women, and children?
4. Why was the Industrial Revolution seen as both a blessing and a curse?

B) Friedrich Engels, “The Condition of the Working Class in England, 1844” p. 259:

5. How did the development of the railways affect the working-class districts?
6. How does Engels feel about the living conditions he observes?
7. What seems to be Engel’s general attitude toward the Industrial Revolution?

C) Testimony for the Factory Act of 1833: Working Conditions in England. p. 82-83 (Sherman):

8. Who gathered these testimonies and for what purpose?

9. What did these people perceive as the worst abuses of factory labor?

10. What were the causes of the poor working conditions?

11. How does Harter defend himself against the charges that he was abusing the working class?

12. What biases might the witnesses hold? Which testimony do you feel is most genuine and why?

D) Samuel Smiles, "Self-Help: Middle Class Attitudes" p. 85-86 (Sherman):

13. Who is Samuel Smiles and why does he publish this pamphlet?

14. How does Smiles justify his assertion that self-help is the only answer to problems? Note forceful statements that support his claim. *Do you agree or disagree with Samuel Smiles? Why or why not?*

15. How would Smiles analyze the situation of the working class and how would he react to the testimonies presented to the parliamentary commission on child labor?

SUMMARY: Explain how the Industrial Revolution changed living conditions for both the middle class and working class. Why do you think it took so long for reform legislation to pass Parliament on behalf of the working class?