



## Y6 – The Victorians

### Key vocabulary

<b>Industry</b>	A group of companies that all produce the same thing.
<b>Invention</b>	A new thing that someone had created or made
<b>Rural</b>	The countryside
<b>Revolution</b>	A big change in something
<b>Compulsory</b>	Having to do something
<b>Crime</b>	Actions which break the laws of a country
<b>Government</b>	People chosen by the people to make laws and run the country.
<b>workhouse</b>	Places set up by the government where poor people with no money could go and be given a bed, food and work. Many had very harsh rules.
<b>laws</b>	Rules passed by government which people living in the country had to abide.

### Working Children

In most poor families the children would also work. Many would work in factories or mines. Children were often given the jobs that their small bodies were useful for, such as clambering under the heavy machinery of the factories to collect dropped cotton or operating the trap door of the mines – these were very dangerous jobs.

Working Conditions:

- Children worked very long hours with little breaks and no fresh air
- They often worked in very dangerous conditions resulting in injuries or death
- Very young children were expected to work
- There was no education for the poor, so it was unlikely they could get better paid jobs when they were older
- Children were paid very little because they were younger

## Queen Victoria

Queen Victoria was born in 1819 at Kensington Palace in London. Her Uncle was King William IV, who had no children of his own, so the crown passed to Victoria when he died. She was 18 when she inherited the throne in 1837. Victoria is described as strong, honest and stubborn. She was the first monarch to live at Buckingham Palace. She reigned for 64 years until her death in 1901, making her the second longest reigning monarch after our current Queen, Queen Elizabeth II.



## The Industrial Revolution

- A period of change in Britain between 1750 and 1900.
- Before the industrial revolution, Britain was a rural country; most people lived off the land with livestock.
- People began to realise that coal and steam could be used to power factories, large machines, flour and cotton mills. This reduced the time it took to make something and increased the amount that could be made and so the industrial revolution began.
- Huge factories were built and towns expanded.
- People would migrate to the towns attracted by reliable work and pay from the factories.
- Houses for workers were built closer to the factories.
- Better transport links helped boost trade by transporting people and goods quickly and cheaply all across the country.

## Lord Shaftesbury

Anthony Ashley Cooper, the eldest son of the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Shaftesbury, was born on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1801. He became the Earl of Shaftesbury in 1851.

At the age of 25 he became a member of parliament and he began to take an interest in the plight of poor children after reading newspaper reports about labour in industry.

1833 he proposed that children should work for a maximum of 10 hours a day.

1834 The Factory Act became law. It was now illegal for children under 9 to be employed by textile factories.

1842 The Coal Mines Act. No child or woman should work underground.

He was also interested in education for working children. He was chairman of Ragged Schools Union – an organization that set up over 100 schools for poor children.

## Schools

At the start of Victoria's reign, only wealthy children went to school or had tutors, because education was not free.

In 1880 a law was passed making it compulsory for every child in Britain between the ages of 5 and 10 to attend school. Lots of new schools were opened in Victorian times, but they were very different from the schools of today.

In Victorian schools, during the afternoons, the girls and boys did different lessons. The boys were taught lessons such as woodworking. The girls were taught how to cook meals, how to do embroidery and how to complete housework (such as washing and ironing)

## Crime and Punishment

**Crimes:** Theft was very common. In busy towns where there were overcrowded streets, pickpockets took the opportunity to steal money and small goods from people's pockets or bags. Many of these pickpockets were children. After lots of factories had been built in cities, groups of criminals would sometimes steal factory goods that were being stored in warehouses. Criminals would also break into houses to steal valuable items. The most serious crimes usually involved violence, poisoning or murder.

**Police Force:** In 1829, a politician called Sir Robert Peel introduced the first English police force in order to improve public order in London. Over the next ten years, many other areas of the country formed their own police force.

**Punishment:** For the first time in history, prisons became the main form of punishment in this period. They were awful places. Transportation: Many criminals were sent to Australia for hard labour. The law allowing this was eventually changed in 1857. Hard labour was a common punishment. Many Victorians believed that having to work very hard would prevent criminals committing crime in the future. The crank and the treadmill: Prisons often made prisoners do pointless tasks such as turn a crank up to 10,000 times a day. Or walk for hours on giant circular tread mills. In 1854, special youth prisons were introduced to deal with child offenders. These were called 'Reformatory Schools'. Other forms of punishment included fines, hanging or being sent to join the army.

1838

Queen Victoria crowned aged 18.

1842

Children can no longer work in underground mines

1861

Prince Albert dies of typhoid

1880

The Education Act makes school compulsory for children aged 5-10

## The Victorians

1840

Queen Victoria married Prince Albert

1856

Each county gets its own police force

1864

Children can no longer work as chimney sweeps

1901

Queen Victoria dies and Edward VII becomes King