

Positive and negative effects of the industrial revolution essay sample

[History](#), [Revolution](#)



The most widespread, influential transformation of civilized life since the creation of agriculture thousands of years before, was the industrial revolution that took place in eighteenth century Europe. The results of this revolution would forever change human labor, consumption, family structure, social structure, and even the very thoughts of an individual. The industrial revolution was driven not only by technological improvements and advancements but by the blending of profound social changes, as Europe moved from a primarily agricultural and rural economy to a capitalist and urban economy, from a household, family-based economy to an industry-based economy. The negative impacts of the Industrial Revolution were evident at the beginning, many hardships had to be overcome, changes took place causing grief to majority of the population. Faith waned, patience was tested, and a umbrella of oppression covered the people of Europe.

When new inventions arose to facilitate the mass production of goods that supplied the people of Europe, nearly everyone was forced to begin a new career within a factory. Factories became so dominant that eventually the cottage industry no longer played a part in people's lives. The consequences of these new inventions and new working environments caused a dramatic plummet in the life expectancy of an average citizen to a shocking 15 years. Women and children were expected to work up to 16 hours a day working in conditions and in ways that could cause serious injury, like working on heavy machinery and carrying large loads while exhausted. All of the work only yielded about 5 shillings per week for women, and children only one. The creation of the cotton gin landed many more peasants in factories while

fueling the African slave trade at a steadily increasing rate. This led to decades more of slavery, especially throughout the British colonies.

It is easy to see how overwhelming the negative impacts of the Industrial Revolution became. But by stepping back and looking at the “larger picture”, one can see the immense benefits of such an era. As the revolution progressed, people began to realize that there were solutions to the problems and afflictions that they battled every day. In 1824, the right to form unions was established. These unions created laws and regulations that made working less dangerous, cruel, and more sanitary. Further acts were formed that decreased the amount of hours women and children could work in factories and enforced safety and sanitary regulations. Such enforcements included the Factory Act of 1833 which said that children had to be over 9 years old to work in factories, and children 9-13 years old couldn't work more than 9 hours, and children 13-18 years old could not work more than 12 hours. More good news was on its way. Wages increased because goods could be produced in greater quantities and sold to more people.

This in turn, lowered the prices of these goods and made them available to those who had not been able to afford them. The government also stepped in to help protect workers who, because of illness, accident, or old age were unable to work, by providing insurance funds and old age pensions. They also began a system of unemployment insurance for workers who lost jobs as a result of business failure or economic slowdown. Technological advancements led to improvements in providing water and sewage systems for all city dwellers. Life as a whole for those who did not fall victim to the 15

year life expectancy and lived through the Industrial Revolution had the pleasure of witnessing many positive developments in life as a whole. Had the Industrial Revolution not taken place our world and its' economies would be slow coming, society would experience greater stratification and personal security would be greatly lacking.