Your notes

KS3 History: revision notes

The Industrial Revolution

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Machines and factories

- Between about 1750 and 1900, Britain changed from a mainly farming country to an industrial one.
- New machines made cloth faster: the spinning jenny (James Hargreaves), the water frame (Richard Arkwright) and the spinning mule (Samuel Crompton). Factories grew up around them.
- James Watt improved the **steam engine** in the 1760s and 1770s, so factories could be built anywhere, powered by coal.

Railways and towns

- The Stockton and Darlington Railway opened in 1825. George Stephenson's Rocket won the Rainhill Trials in 1829, and the Liverpool and Manchester Railway opened in 1830.
- Railways moved goods and people quickly, brought fresh food to cities, made seaside trips possible and led to a standard time across the country.
- Towns grew fast as people moved from the countryside for **factory** work. Cheap **back-to-back houses** were overcrowded, with little light, air or clean water.

Working conditions

- **Factory** workers, including children, worked 12 to 16 hours a day with dangerous machines, fines and beatings.
- The **Factory Act** of 1833 banned children under 9 from working in textile mills and limited the hours of older children.
- Reformers such as Lord Shaftesbury campaigned for better conditions; Robert Owen ran a model mill at New Lanark.

Public health

- **Cholera** spread in dirty water. In 1854, John Snow showed that a **cholera** outbreak in London came from a water pump on Broad Street.
- The "Great Stink" of 1858 (sewage in the River Thames) led Joseph Bazalgette to build London's sewers.
- **Public Health** Acts (1848 and 1875) made towns provide clean water and sewers.

Key terms

Industrial Revolution	The change to machines and factories from about 1750 to 1900.
Factory	A building where goods are made by machines.
Steam engine	A machine powered by steam from burning coal.
Urbanisation	The growth of towns and cities.
Back-to-back houses	Cheap houses joined at the back and sides, with little light or air.
Child labour	Children working, often in dangerous conditions.
Factory Act	A law that improved conditions in factories.
Cholera	A deadly disease spread in dirty water.
Public health	The health of the whole population.

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. Roughly when was the Industrial Revolution in Britain?
2. Who improved the steam engine in the 1760s and 1770s?
3. What did Richard Arkwright invent?
4. What was the Rocket?
5. What was life like for children in early factories?
6. What did the Factory Act of 1833 do?
7. What caused cholera?
8. Who showed in 1854 that cholera spread through water?

Answers

1. 1750 to 1900
2. James Watt
3. The water frame, for spinning cotton
4. George Stephenson's steam locomotive
5. Long hours, dangerous machines and harsh punishments
6. Banned children under 9 from working in textile mills
7. Drinking water polluted with sewage

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8. John Snow

What to do next

Practise 12 questions on this topic

Try 4 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

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