Factories Across Time

Compare industrial change in two eras

GHW.6.4 "Compare and contrast the impact of the Industrial Revolution on developed countries with the economic processes acting upon less developed and developing countries in the contemporary world."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline effects of factory growth that Britain and Bangladesh share, circle differences in how their economies work, and number one piece of evidence for each difference.

A Shirt's Changing Journey

1 In nineteenth-century Britain, a cotton shirt could begin in a mill powered by coal-fired steam engines. Machines increased output, while people left farms for growing factory cities. Investors built mills and railways, and workers earned wages, but many faced long hours, low pay, and polluted air. Britain's factories also relied on cotton grown overseas, including cotton produced by enslaved people in the United States before 1865. Over time, laws, unions, and public investment helped improve some working conditions and infrastructure. Industrial growth contributed to Britain's wealth, though its gains were never shared equally.

2 Today, a shirt sold in a wealthy country might be sewn in Bangladesh, a developing country with a large garment industry. Workers often move from rural areas to cities for factory jobs, and exports bring income and foreign currency. Unlike early British mills, these factories enter an established world market: brands based abroad place orders, and factories may import fabric or equipment. Competition for orders can keep wages and prices under pressure. After the 2013 Rana Plaza building collapse, which killed more than 1,100 people, campaigns and inspection programs pushed for safer buildings, although safety and labor-rights concerns remain.

3 The two periods share a pattern: factory production can create jobs and rapid urban growth while exposing workers to danger and unequal rewards. Yet their economic starting points differ. Britain helped develop new industrial technologies and expanded an empire that supplied resources and markets; Bangladesh manufactures within global supply chains shaped by foreign buyers and existing technology. A British mill owner sold cloth in domestic and overseas markets, while a Bangladeshi supplier may depend on a distant brand's orders. Both governments can set safety rules, but global purchasing decisions now affect where jobs go and how much suppliers can spend on wages and protections.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did factory growth change where people worked in both nineteenth-century Britain and Bangladesh today? Name one risk workers faced in each place.

2. How do the two countries' starting points for industrial production differ? Use one detail about technology or markets from each era.

3. Compare efforts to make factory work safer in Britain and Bangladesh. What problem did each effort respond to?

4. Both countries' factories have overseas connections. How does the passage show a difference in the influence of overseas businesses on production?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Suppose a developing country attracts foreign investors to assemble electric bicycles from imported parts for export, and workers move from farms to its factory city. In five to seven sentences, compare this change with nineteenth-century Britain, giving two similarities, two differences, and one policy that could address a risk.

Factories Across Time

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline effects of factory growth that Britain and Bangladesh share, circle differences in how their economies work, and number one piece of evidence for each difference. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did factory growth change where people worked in both nineteenth-century Britain and Bangladesh today? Name one risk workers faced in each place.	**People moved from rural areas to factory cities in both places. British workers faced long hours and polluted air; Bangladeshi garment workers have faced building-safety risks.**
2	How do the two countries' starting points for industrial production differ? Use one detail about technology or markets from each era.	**Britain helped develop new industrial technologies as its factories grew. Bangladesh uses existing technology to produce goods in an established world market.**
3	Compare efforts to make factory work safer in Britain and Bangladesh. What problem did each effort respond to?	**In Britain, laws and unions helped improve conditions after workers faced long hours and other hardships. In Bangladesh, campaigns and inspections pushed for safer buildings after the Rana Plaza collapse.**
4	Both countries' factories have overseas connections. How does the passage show a difference in the influence of overseas businesses on production?	**British mills relied on overseas cotton and sold cloth abroad, but a Bangladeshi supplier may depend on orders from a distant brand. Those purchasing decisions can affect jobs, wages, and safety spending.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Like nineteenth-century Britain, the country could gain factory jobs as people move from farms to a growing city. Increased production could also bring income, though the gains might not be shared equally. Unlike Britain, which helped develop new industrial technologies, this country would assemble bicycles from imported parts. Its factories could also depend on orders from foreign buyers in an established world market. Workers in both periods might face long hours or unsafe buildings. The government could require building inspections and enforce limits on work hours to reduce those risks.

Accept other comparisons supported by the passage. For the open task, look for two distinct similarities, two distinct differences, and a policy connected to a stated risk.