Factories and Futures

How industrial change led to competing socialist ideas

MWH.C.5.2.D "Describe the rise of socialism, including the ideas and influence of Robert Owen and Karl Marx, as well as the major ideas of Marx and Engels' The Communist Manifesto."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two factory conditions that helped socialism grow, circle two actions Owen took, and number three claims from The Communist Manifesto. Use your marks to compare how these thinkers wanted society to change.

Who Should Benefit From Industry?

1. At a nineteenth-century textile mill, a worker might spend long days tending machines while the owner collected profits. As factories spread across Europe, crowded housing, low wages, and dangerous work made many people question who benefited from industrial growth. Socialism grew from this debate. Socialists differed in their plans, but many argued that land and industry should serve the public good rather than enrich only private owners. Some sought change through cooperative communities or reforms, while others believed workers would need to replace the existing economic system.

2. Robert Owen, a Welsh factory owner, tried to show that industrial life could be different. At his cotton mills in New Lanark, Scotland, he improved housing, supported schooling for children, and reduced working hours. Owen argued that people's surroundings helped shape their behavior, so better conditions could create a better society. He later helped establish a cooperative community at New Harmony, Indiana, in the United States. That experiment did not last, but his efforts influenced later cooperative movements and advocates of workplace reform. Owen's example suggested that people could change society by building and testing alternatives to harsh factory life.

3. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels took a different approach in *The Communist Manifesto*, published in 1848. They argued that history was shaped by struggles between social classes. In industrial society, they said, the bourgeoisie owned factories and other productive property, while the proletariat sold its labor for wages. Marx and Engels predicted that workers would unite across countries and overthrow the owners' rule. They called for an end to private ownership of the means of production, such as factories, not an end to every personal possession. They expected a classless society to emerge after workers ended the system they saw as exploitative.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did factory conditions help socialism grow, and what change did many socialists want?

2. How did Owen try to change industrial life, and how did his work influence others?

3. Why did Marx and Engels expect industrial workers to overthrow owners' rule?

4. What kind of property did Marx and Engels want to end private ownership of, and what society did they expect to follow?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A new mill town has long hours and unsafe workplaces. Write a four- or five-sentence speech to its workers that explains what Owen would try and what Marx and Engels would urge, then recommends one path using at least two ideas from the passage to support your choice.

Factories and Futures

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two factory conditions that helped socialism grow, circle two actions Owen took, and number three claims from The Communist Manifesto. Use your marks to compare how these thinkers wanted society to change. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did factory conditions help socialism grow, and what change did many socialists want?	**Conditions such as low wages and dangerous work led people to question who benefited from industry. Many socialists wanted land and industry to serve the public good rather than enrich only private owners.**
2	How did Owen try to change industrial life, and how did his work influence others?	**Owen improved housing, supported children's schooling, and reduced hours at New Lanark. His experiments influenced cooperative movements and advocates of workplace reform.**
3	Why did Marx and Engels expect industrial workers to overthrow owners' rule?	**They viewed industrial society as a class struggle between owners of productive property and workers who sold their labor. They predicted that workers would unite across countries to end a system they considered exploitative.**
4	What kind of property did Marx and Engels want to end private ownership of, and what society did they expect to follow?	**They wanted to end private ownership of the means of production, such as factories, not every personal possession. They expected a classless society to emerge.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Workers of this town, Owen would shorten your hours and improve your housing to show that factory life can change. Marx and Engels would argue that owners profit because they control the mills, and they would urge workers to unite and end private ownership of factories. I recommend Owen's path first because shorter hours could improve daily life without waiting for a revolution. His work at New Lanark shows how factory reforms could be tested, even though his later community at New Harmony did not last.

Accept different supported recommendations in Part 3 if the speech accurately distinguishes Owen's reforms or cooperative experiments from Marx and Engels' call for united workers to replace private ownership of productive property. For the marking job, students may select any two conditions, two Owen actions, and three distinct claims stated in the passage.