

Victorian Life with Ellie the Elephant

Learning objective: To understand daily life and social conditions during the Victorian era.

Read the passage below carefully, then answer the questions that follow in full sentences.

Ellie the Elephant loves visiting the Victorian era because she has an incredible memory for history. The Victorian period, named after Queen Victoria, was a time of huge change. Massive steam engines and busy factories transformed the country, leading to what historians call the Industrial Revolution. While some people became very wealthy, living in grand houses with many servants, life was extremely difficult for others. Many children did not go to school. Instead, they worked long, exhausting hours in dark factories or dangerous coal mines to help their families survive. Some children were even employed as chimney sweeps, climbing into narrow, soot-filled spaces to clean them. Despite the poverty many faced, it was also a time of progress. New inventions like the railway made travel faster than ever before. By the end of the era, laws were finally passed to stop young children from working in such harsh conditions and to ensure all children received an education. Ellie remembers these stories to remind us how far we have come.

Word bank: Industrial Revolution · Victorian · factories · chimney sweep · poverty · wealth

1. Who was the Victorian era named after? (1 mark)

2. Name two jobs that children might have done during the Victorian era. (2 marks)

3. Why might a Victorian child have been unable to go to school? (2 marks)

4. What does the text suggest about the quality of life for the wealthy compared to the poor? (2 marks)

5. Do you think the new laws mentioned at the end of the passage were important? Explain why. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a scene comparing a Victorian factory with a modern classroom to show how different children's lives are today.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a drawing that compares a Victorian factory with a modern classroom.

Extension challenge: Research one Victorian invention, such as the telephone or the lightbulb. Write a short paragraph explaining how it changed the way people lived.