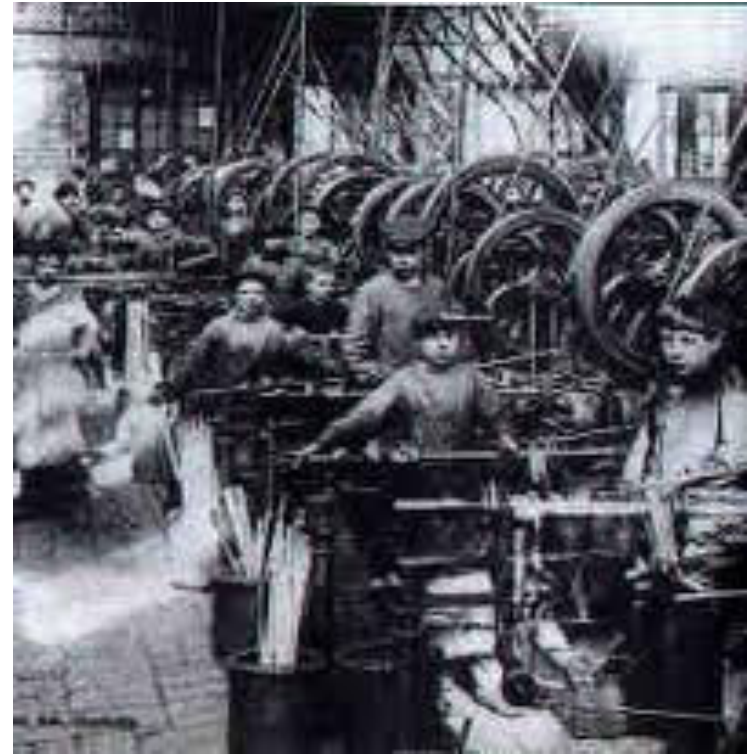


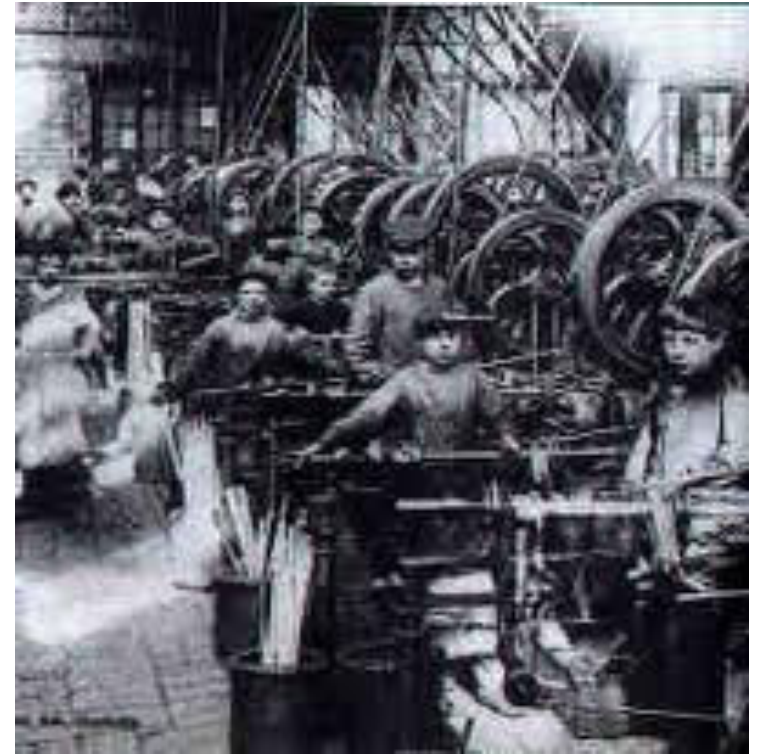
What were conditions like for child workers in Victorian Britain?

CHILD LABOUR

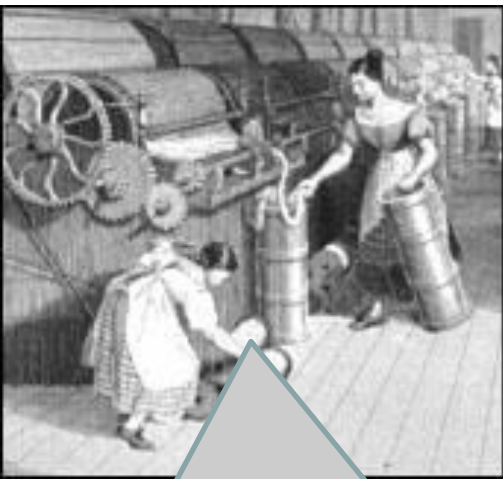
Many factory workers were children. They worked long hours and were often treated badly by the supervisors or overseers. Sometimes the children started work as young as four or five years old. A young child could not earn much, but even a few pence would be enough to buy food. Children were often forced to work almost as soon as they could walk. This was not something new to the Victorian period as children had always been expected to work for hundreds of years. Many were used as cheap labour.



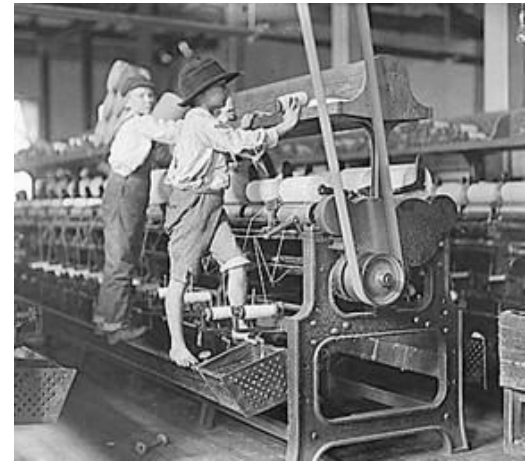
- Children worked very long hours with little breaks and no fresh air.
- They often worked in very dangerous conditions resulting in injuries or even death.
- Very young children were expected to work.
- There was no education for the poor, so it was very unlikely they could get better paid jobs when they were older.
- Children were paid very little because they were younger.



Factory Workers



Children worked long hours and sometimes had to carry out some dangerous jobs working in factories



"I start work promptly at 5am in the morning and work all day till 9pm at night. That's 16 hours! We are not allowed to talk, sit or look out of the window whilst we work. The only day off from work I get is on Sundays, when we have to go to church."

Girl aged 9

In the mills children were made to clean machines while they kept running and there were many accidents. Many children lost fingers in the machinery and some were killed.

1844 - Factory Act - Stopped children between 8 and 12 from working more than 6 and a half hours a day.

1878 - Factory and Workshop Act - Children under 10 were banned from working in factories.

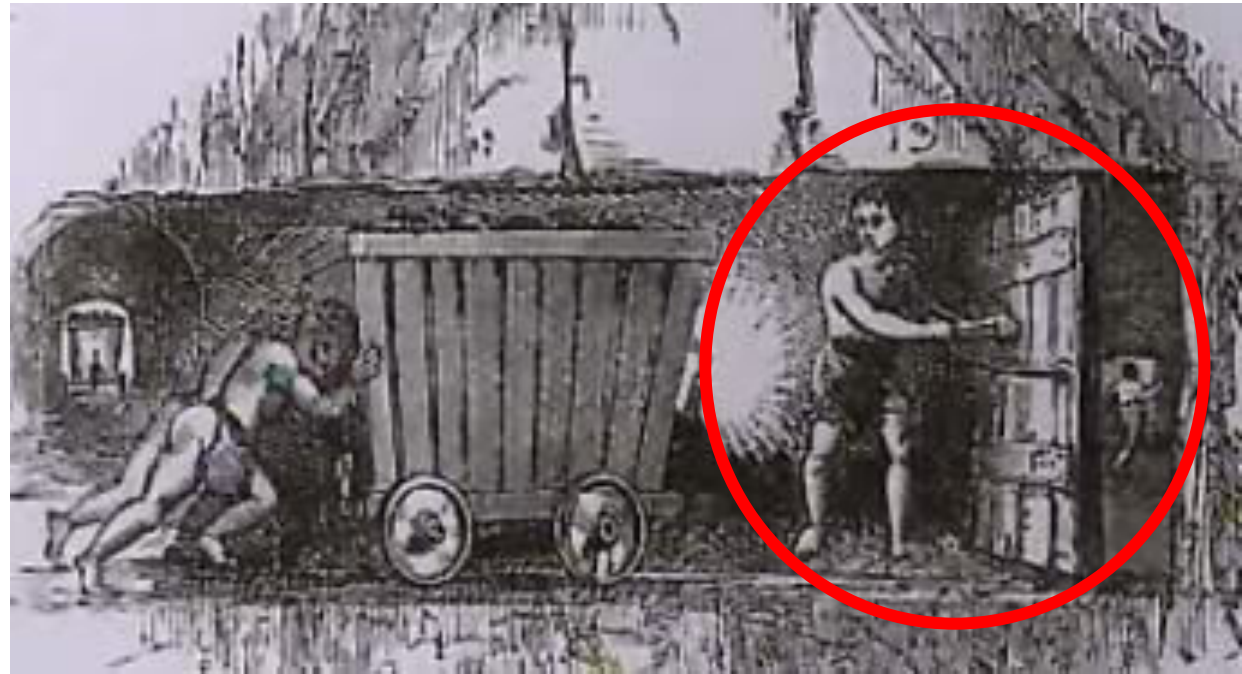


Mine Workers

Were children who opened and closed the air doors providing fresh air for the miners.

Trappers

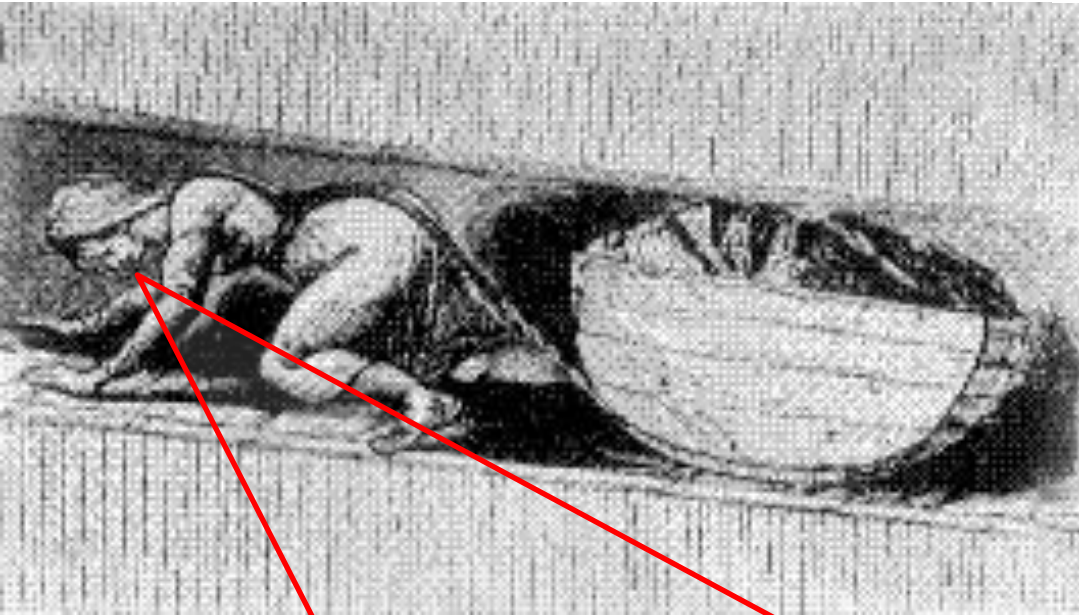
By keeping the fresh air flowing they prevented the build up of dangerous gases.



The children would sit in the draft of the doors, cold, damp and very frightened, with little or no light for 12 hours a day.

Mine Workers

Drawers



Drawers pulled heavy carts of cut coal to the pits surface with heavy chains around their waists.

"I have a belt round my waist, and a chain passing between my legs, and I go on my hands and feet. The tunnels are narrow and very wet where I work. My clothes are wet through almost all day long." Girl aged 10