

## Topic 5.9 — Society and the Industrial Age

### Standards Alignment

AP Theme	Learning Objective	Key Concept
Social Interactions and Organization (SIO) The process by which societies group their members and the norms that govern the interactions between these groups and between individuals influence political, economic, and cultural institutions and organization.	<b>Unit 5: Learning Objective J</b> – Explain how industrialization caused change in existing social hierarchies and standards of living.	<b>KC-5.1.VI.A</b> New social classes, including the middle class and the industrial working class, developed.
		<b>KC-5.1.VI.B</b> While women and often children in working class families typically held wage-earning jobs to supplement their families' income, middle-class women who did not have the same economic demands to satisfy were increasingly limited to roles in the household or roles focused on child development.
		<b>KC-5.1.VI.C</b> The rapid urbanization that accompanied global capitalism at times led to a variety of challenges, including pollution, poverty, increased crime, public health crises, housing shortages, and insufficient infrastructure to accommodate urban growth.

### Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson students should be able to:

- Describe how industrialization created new social classes.
- Explain how gender roles changed in industrial societies.
- Identify challenges created by rapid urbanization.
- Analyze how standards of living changed during the Industrial Age.

### Lesson Overview

Industrialization transformed social structures in many societies during the nineteenth century. The growth of factories and urban industries created new social classes, including an industrial working class and an expanding middle class.

Industrial workers often faced difficult conditions, including long hours and low wages. Many working-class families relied on the labor of women and children to support household incomes. At the same time, middle-class families often

emphasized new ideas about family life and gender roles, with women increasingly expected to focus on domestic responsibilities.

Rapid urbanization accompanied industrial growth. Cities expanded quickly as people migrated from rural areas to find work in factories. This rapid population growth created challenges such as overcrowding, pollution, and poor public health, which governments and reformers attempted to address.

### Essential Vocabulary

- **Middle Class**  
A social group consisting of professionals, merchants, and business owners with moderate wealth and influence.
- **Working Class**  
Industrial laborers who work in factories or manual jobs for wages.
- **Urbanization**  
The growth of cities as people move from rural areas to urban centers.
- **Standard of Living**  
The level of wealth, comfort, and material goods available to individuals or groups.
- **Domestic Sphere**  
The idea that women's roles were primarily within the home and family life.

### Background Reading

The Industrial Revolution created new social divisions within industrial societies. A growing **middle class** included factory owners, managers, professionals, and merchants who benefited economically from industrial growth. This group often enjoyed higher standards of living and increased political influence.

At the same time, a large **industrial working class** emerged. Factory workers frequently worked long hours under difficult conditions and earned relatively low wages. Because wages were often insufficient, many working-class families relied on the labor of women and children in factories, mines, or domestic service.

Industrialization also transformed urban life. Cities grew rapidly as rural populations migrated to industrial centers. However, the rapid expansion of cities often overwhelmed existing infrastructure. Many urban residents lived in crowded housing with poor sanitation, which contributed to public health problems and social tensions.

### Primary Sources

#### Primary Source 1

#### **Friedrich Engels — *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845)**

Source: Fordham University Internet History Sourcebook

<https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/1845engels.asp>

The rapid growth of industry has drawn large numbers of workers into the cities, where they live in crowded and unhealthy conditions. Entire districts are filled with narrow streets and poorly constructed housing, often lacking proper sanitation.

Families frequently share small rooms, and the air is thick with smoke from factories and coal fires. Disease spreads quickly in these crowded neighborhoods, especially among children.

These conditions demonstrate the profound social consequences of industrialization. While industry creates wealth for some, many workers struggle with poverty and difficult living conditions.

### Source Analysis Questions

1. Identify ONE challenge created by rapid urbanization.
2. Explain ONE way industrialization affected working-class living conditions.
3. Describe ONE social consequence of industrialization suggested by the passage.

### Primary Source 2

#### Flora Tristan — *The Workers' Union* (1843)

Source: Marxists Internet Archive

<https://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/ni/vol05/no07/tristan.htm>

The condition of workers cannot improve unless they unite and demand justice. Industrial society has created enormous wealth, yet the workers who produce this wealth receive little benefit.

Women and children often labor alongside men in factories, contributing to the survival of their families. Despite their labor, they remain among the poorest members of society.

If workers organize and demand reforms, they may achieve better wages, improved working conditions, and greater dignity in their lives.

### Source Analysis Questions

1. Identify ONE social group discussed in the passage.
2. Explain ONE criticism the author makes about industrial society.
3. Explain ONE response workers might take to improve their conditions.

### Social Classes in the Industrial Age

Social Class	Characteristics	Typical Occupations
Upper Class	Wealthy industrialists and landowners	Factory owners, financiers
Middle Class	Professionals and business leaders	Managers, engineers, merchants
Working Class	Wage laborers with limited wealth	Factory workers, miners

### Change, Continuity, and Comparison

#### Change

- New social classes emerged in industrial societies.
- Urban populations expanded rapidly.
- Standards of living improved for some middle-class groups.

### **Continuity**

- Social inequality remained widespread.
- Many workers continued to experience difficult living conditions.

### **Comparison**

Middle-class families often experienced improved living standards, while working-class families faced economic hardship and relied on multiple wage earners.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Industrialization created new social classes such as the middle class and working class.
- Many working-class families relied on women and children to earn wages.
- Middle-class women were increasingly associated with domestic roles.
- Rapid urbanization created major social challenges in growing cities.
- Standards of living improved for some groups but remained difficult for many workers.

### **Practice Activity**

Answer each question in **2–3 sentences**.

- A. Identify ONE new social class that developed during industrialization.
- B. Explain ONE way industrialization affected gender roles.
- C. Explain ONE challenge created by rapid urbanization.

### **Primary Source Citations**

Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845)

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