

CHAPTER
19
SECTION 3

Section Summary

SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

READING CHECK

Who made up the new middle class that emerged during the Industrial Revolution?

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What does the word *contaminated* mean in the underlined sentence? What clues can you find in the surrounding words, phrases, or sentences? Circle the words in the paragraph that could help you figure out what *contaminated* means.

READING SKILL

Understand Effects How did the Industrial Revolution affect the lives of the working class?

The Industrial Revolution brought rapid **urbanization**, or the movement of people to cities. Changes in farming, soaring population growth, and a demand for workers led masses of people to migrate from farms to cities. Almost overnight, small towns that were located around coal or iron mines grew into cities. Other cities developed around the factories in once-quiet market towns.

Those who benefited most from the Industrial Revolution were the entrepreneurs who set it in motion. The Industrial Revolution created this new middle class, whose members came from a variety of backgrounds. While the wealthy and the middle class lived in pleasant neighborhoods, vast numbers of poor struggled to survive in slums. They packed into tiny rooms in **tenements** that had no running water and no sewage or sanitation system. Sewage rotted in the streets or was dumped into rivers, which created an overwhelming stench and contaminated drinking water. This led to the spread of diseases such as cholera.

The heart of the new industrial city was the factory. Working in a factory differed greatly from working on a farm. In rural villages, people worked hard, but the work varied according to the season. Some seasons were easier than others. The factory system imposed a harsh new way of life on workers. Working hours were long, with shifts lasting from twelve to sixteen hours, six or seven days a week. Exhausted workers were injured by machines that had no safety devices. Working conditions in the mines were even worse than in the factories. Factories and mines also hired many boys and girls. These children often started working at age seven or eight; a few were as young as five.

The early industrial age brought terrible hardships. In time, however, reformers pressed for laws to improve working conditions. **Labor unions** won the right to bargain with employers for better wages, hours, and working conditions. Despite the social problems created by the Industrial Revolution—low pay, dismal living conditions—the industrial age did have some positive effects. Wages rose. Also as the cost of railroad travel fell, more people could afford to travel further and faster than ever before.

Review Questions

1. What caused rapid urbanization to occur during the Industrial Revolution?

2. How did the factory system change the way people worked?
