

History Quiz : Answers

1. At the age of 10, the average height and weight of the young factory worker was:

B) 50 inches (127 cm) tall and 48 pounds (21.77 Kgs) in weight.

2. How much were young workers aged 11 to 16 paid a week for working long hours in the factory?

A) 2 shillings 3 pence (about 12p)

3. At the age of 22 years, who was paid the most money for working the long factory hours?

A) Men. They were paid almost twice as much as women.

4. What was the average temperature that people worked in on the factory floor?

C) 85° Fahrenheit (30° Centigrade) - very hot. Like a hot summer's day. When workers left the factory and went into cold air, the contrast in temperatures often made them ill.

5. The biggest danger to children working in factories was from:

C) unguarded machinery. Factories were crowded with people and machines, few of them were guarded, so the moving parts were very near to the workers.

6. The most common injury to children and young people in the workplace was:

C) mutilation to their arms and legs - including lost limbs. In the Northern cotton mills, young children were employed to dive in and out of the machinery picking up bits of stray cotton - many of them became entangled in the machinery.

7. What happened to those children and young people who had accidents at work?

C) They were abandoned by their workplace, their wages were stopped and they were not given medical attention. Sad but true. There was no welfare state in those days.

8. What time in the morning were young workers expected to start their working day?

A) 5 am. Workers had a very early start and they dare not be late!

9. What sort of places were factories in the 19th Century?

B) They were noisy, dirty and smelly with no washing or toilet facilities. Can you imagine working in these conditions today?

10. How long did a child worker or young person have to be in the factory before becoming ill?

B) A few weeks. It usually took a few weeks for a new young worker to fall ill. In the cotton factories it was known as 'mill fever'. The symptoms were headaches and feelings of sickness.

What your score means

All 10 questions right

Congratulations! You must be an historian or you have great intuition. Either way, you know a lot about the awful conditions young workers faced back in the 19th century. Spare them a thought and thank your lucky stars that things are different now.

6-9 questions right

Well done! Not too bad at all. You know a fair bit about the atrocious conditions young people used to work in back in the 19th Century. Perhaps things were even worse than you thought they were. Look back at the questions you got wrong and try to imagine what it was really like back then.

5 and under

Okay. You had a go. Perhaps you're an idealist and like to think of things as being better than they really are. It is sad, but true, that working conditions for young people really were as harsh and brutal as they can get. The good news is that things did change and slowly but surely, working conditions improved.