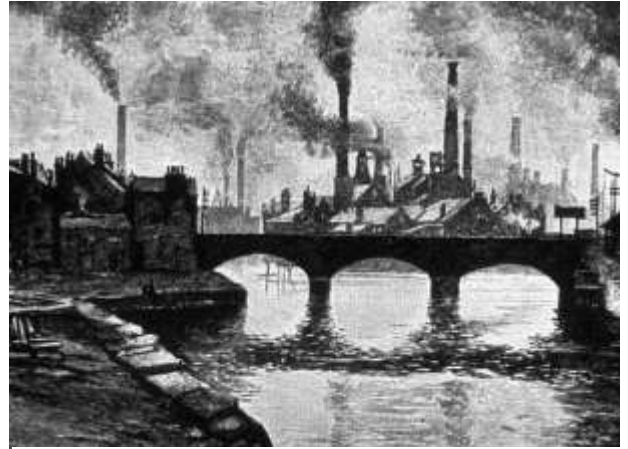


# THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: *THE BAD*

Not every impact of the Industrial Revolution was a good impact. For every action that we take as mankind, there is almost always an unintended consequence as well. This was definitely the case for the Industrial Revolution.

## Pollution

One of the easiest things to see as a negative impact of the Industrial Revolution is pollution. Throughout the Industrial Revolution, there was no regulation, or government control, on businesses. Because of this fact, factories would just create as much pollution as they wanted, because nobody told them that they weren't allowed to do it. This obviously made water unsafe to drink, ruined the environment, and caused diseases for the people who had to breathe in the polluted air, or drink polluted water.



*Reducing pollution from factories costs the factory owner money. Without government laws making them do it, the Industrial Revolution was characterized by filthy cities full of pollution and waste.*

My grandmother, who was born in 1921, tells me of a time in Pittsburgh when she was a little girl and she remembered coming out of her house in the morning, and seeing black ash laying on the ground like snow. Sometimes, it would be so bad that there would be about a half of an inch of dirt and ash laying on the ground from the factories.



*In the 1800's, it wasn't slaves that Europeans wanted to take from Africa, but the natural resources.*

## Imperialism

We will talk a lot more about Imperialism later, but it is worth mentioning as a negative impact of the Industrial Revolution as well. Factories cannot create things out of nothing; they need raw materials like coal, metal, and wood to make into the goods that they sell. Great Britain and other European countries had plenty of coal, which they needed to burn in order to run their machines, but they did not have the other materials in abundance. This drove them to begin to look in other places in the world for these resources.

One place that had many resources, and little power or control to stop the Europeans from taking the resources was Africa. Throughout

the 1800's, the European Powers (especially France and England) would conquer most of Africa, and force those countries to become colonies.



The Spanish Flu of 1918 impacted 1 of every 2 humans on earth.

## Disease

Any time that lots of people move close together, the possibility of diseases spreading becomes much greater. With so many people moving to the cities for the jobs in the factories, disease began to run rampant. One of the biggest problems in the cities was the complete lack of sanitation standards in those cities. Literally, the cities were growing too fast for their own good.

One of the biggest challenges with large groups of people living in a small space is what to do with all of the waste that they produce. In the new cities, there were not sewer systems to take away the human waste, which meant that it normally ended up in ditches beside the streets or in the alleys. From there, it would run into the ground, and contaminate the well water that the people were drinking, which would make people sick.

Another challenge is the constant battle that humans are fighting against viruses and bacteria. Most of these diseases spread by human contact, and in cities, contact with other infected humans was much more likely, since there were literally millions of people living within a few miles of each other. Before, when people lived in small towns or on farms, the risk of diseases spreading out of control was relatively small because they simply didn't interact with enough people on a daily (or even weekly) basis for a disease to spread. The 100 years during the Industrial Revolution in Europe and America saw some of the worst disease epidemics simply because people spread the disease so quickly and didn't have the systems in place to be healthy.



*Boiling water before drinking it kills bacteria and makes it safe to drink. Once people discovered what was causing Cholera and other diseases, they were able to come up with strategies to fight it.*

### Reading Comprehension Questions

1. Why did the Industrial Revolution make it more likely to have a disease epidemic?
2. How is regulation good for the environment, but bad for businesses?
3. What did cities have to build to make cities cleaner, and safer for people to live in?

Write about it. Create a public service announcement describing the preventative measures which could help stop a disease from spreading today.