

ACTIVITY SIX: ART, LITERATURE, AND THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

TEACHER DEBRIEFING SHEET

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Compare and contrast Romanticism and Realism.
2. If you were a factory worker at the time of the Industrial Revolution, which style of art and literature, Romantic or Realist, would you prefer, and why? If you were a factory owner?
3. Describe the visual, literary, and emotional techniques Realist social critics (including Muckrakers) used to make their point(s).
4. To what extent was the art and literature of the Romantic Movement also social criticism?
5. Was the Industrial Revolution a problem, progress, or a promise? Justify your answer with specific evidence.

TASK:

Create a debate between the Industrial Revolution era Romantics and Realists. Artists and writers of the era must debate the following question, “Which art form is more necessary during the Industrial Revolution: Romanticism or Realism?” Debaters must back up their arguments with reference to specific works of art and literature.

TASK EVALUATION CRITERIA:



- Debate occurs between the Industrial Revolution era Romantics and Realists and focuses on the question: “Which art form is more necessary during the Industrial Revolution: Romanticism or Realism?”
- Each side (the Romantics and the Realists) presents at least two reasons why their art form is more necessary during the Industrial Revolution.
- Debate makes use of specific literature and art presented on your Resource Cards and two or more of the following: costumes, personal testimony (firsthand accounts) from people living at the time of the Industrial Revolution, sound effects, and/or props.
- Each side (the Romantics and the Realists) includes perspectives (points of view) from at least two different countries.
- Debate includes discussion about whether industrialization is a problem, progress, or a promise.

EXTENSION QUESTIONS:

1. Which piece of art or literature from your Resource Cards is most memorable? Why?
2. If you were a wealthy business owner during the Industrial Revolution, how might you have reacted to Realist art and literature, particularly that of the Muckrakers?
3. To what extent are art and literature political?
4. Why do you think the works of many of the Realists, including Charles Dickens and Upton Sinclair, are still popular today?
5. Why do you think Neoclassicism didn’t survive in the industrial age?
6. If you were a Realist social critic, which one of the following art forms would you choose to create, and why: painting, photography, poetry, novels, or plays?
7. Compare and contrast Wordsworth’s poetry with Upton Sinclair’s “The Jungle.”
8. Compare and contrast John Constable’s painting “Wivenhoe Park” and Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg’s painting “Coalbrookdale at Night.”
9. In what ways are art and literature connected to economics?
10. Why might romantic tales about the past appeal to the average person living at the time of the Industrial Revolution?

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ACTIVITY CARD

-  Read the CONTEXT-SETTING CARD. Then use the information on your RESOURCE CARDS to talk about the DISCUSSION QUESTIONS.
-  Examine the TASK and complete the project to meet all of the TASK EVALUATION CRITERIA.

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CONTEXT-SETTING CARD

For many people, life during the Industrial Revolution was harsh (extremely difficult). Cities were polluted and crowded, which allowed for disease to spread quickly. Jobs in the major industries – textiles (cloth) and mining – required long hours, sometimes as much as fourteen hours a day. The conditions in industrial workplaces were far from ideal (perfect), as workers breathed in dirty and dusty air and worked with dangerous machinery.

Artists and writers responded to life in the Industrial Revolution in a variety of ways. As the Industrial Revolution progressed (moved forward), two major artistic and literary movements emerged (came out): Romanticism and Realism.

Romanticism

The art and literature of the Romantic Movement was based on emotion and imagination. The Romantic Movement differed greatly from the Neoclassic Movement that preceded (came before) it. Neoclassic art and literature was based on reason and order, and Neoclassicists viewed their subjects objectively (without judgment or emotion). Romantic art and literature broke through the boundaries set by the Neoclassicists, allowing for new, and freer, forms of expression.

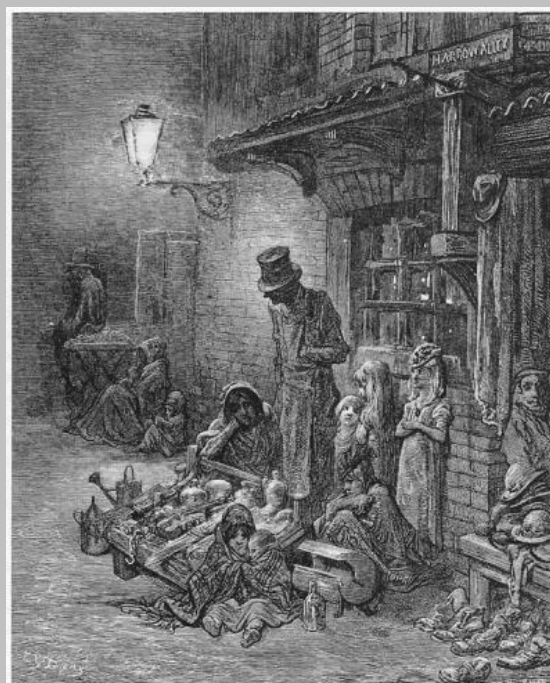
Excerpt from the poem “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud,” by British poet William Wordsworth, 1804:

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er [over] vales [valleys] and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils [a type of flower];
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering [flapping] and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way [galaxy],
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin [edge] of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly [lively] dance.

Realism

The art and literature of the Realist Movement showed life as it was, both the good and the bad. Realist artists and writers observed the world around them and tried to reproduce it in their art and writing.



“Houndsditch” (Houndsditch was the name of a neighborhood in London) by French painter Gustave Doré, 1872

While both Romanticism and Realism were popular during the industrial era, Romanticism dominated (was more common and popular) from the late 1700s to the mid-1800s, and Realism dominated from the mid-1800s on.

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RESOURCE CARD 1 (OF 4)

The Romantic Movement: Overview & Visual Art

The artists and writers of the Romantic Movement put their passions (strong emotions) and imagination into their work. The art and literature created by Romantic artists and writers often reflected the beauty of nature or dealt with hopeful themes, such as nationalism (patriotism), spirituality, or the goodness of mankind. Romantic art and literature provided people with an escape from the challenges of daily life during the Industrial Revolution.



“Wivenhoe Park” by British painter John Constable, 1816



“Morning” by German painter Caspar David Friedrich, 1821

German Romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich:

The artist should paint not only what he sees before him, but also what he sees in him.

INDUSTRIALIZATION: PROBLEM, PROGRESS, OR PROMISE?

Revised 10/05

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RESOURCE CARD 2 (OF 4)

Romanticism: Literature

Although the subjects they wrote about differed greatly, the writers of the Romantic Movement had one thing in common: their use of imagination and emotion. The works of literature most commonly associated with the Romantic Movement are the poems of British poets William Wordsworth and William Blake; however, many other writers were an important part of the Romantic Movement. Several British women writers contributed greatly to Romanticism. Mary Shelley's novel, *Frankenstein*, told the story of a scientist who, in trying to create a human, instead creates a monster. *Frankenstein* captured people's fear of the new technologies created during the era of the Industrial Revolution. The Brontë sisters' novels, both Charlotte's *Jane Eyre* and Emily's *Wuthering Heights* were dark and dramatic love stories. French writers, such as Alexandre Dumas (author of *The Three Musketeers*) and Victor Hugo (author of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*), told romantic tales about the past.

"My Heart Leaps Up" Up by British poet William Wordsworth, 1802:

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety
[faith].

"The Shepherd" by British poet William Blake, 1789:

How sweet is the shepherd's sweet
lot!
From the morn to the evening he
strays [roams or walks around];
He shall follow his sheep all the day,
And his tongue shall be filled with
praise.

For he hears the lambs' innocent call,
And he hears the ewes' tender reply;
He is watchful while they are in
peace,
For they know when their shepherd is
nigh [near].

"The Chimney Sweeper" by British poet William Blake, 1789:

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry 'weep! 'weep! 'weep! 'weep!
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot [dust] I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved: so I said,
"Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair."

And so he was quiet; and that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight, -
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black.

And by came an angel who had a bright key,
And he opened the coffins and set them all free;
Then down a green plain leaping, laughing, they run,
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds and sport in the wind;
And the angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark,
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm;
So if all do their duty they need not fear harm.

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RESOURCE CARD 3 (OF 4) Realism: Overview & Visual Art

Realist art and literature was based on the realities of daily life. The art and literature created by Realist artists and writers exposed (made known) life as it was, showing the difficult living and working conditions that existed during the Industrial Revolution. Realism showed people that they were not alone in their suffering.

Many Realists were activists who hoped that their work would expose the evils of society and lead to reform (changes for the better). These artists and writers hoped that their work would inspire politicians and others to make lasting changes that would improve living and working conditions for people. These activist artists and writers were also known as “social critics” (and their work as “social criticism”) because their intent was to criticize society. In the United States, these artists and writers were known as “Muckrakers” because they raked (or exposed) the muck (the dirt or filth) that existed in society. Most social critics took on a particular cause, such as child labor, living conditions in slums (poor neighborhoods), or working conditions in a particular industry.



Photograph of a tenement (apartment building in the slums) in New York City, by Dutch-born American Muckraker Jacob Riis, from his 1890 book *How the Other Half Lives*



“Coalbrookdale at Night” by French painter Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg, 1801

French Realist painter Gustave Courbet:

I have never seen angels. Show me an angel and I will paint one.

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RESOURCE CARD 4 (OF 4)

Realism: Literature

Realist authors created works of fiction; their stories used fictional characters, but their plots were based in reality. The most famous of the Realist authors is the British writer Charles Dickens. His novels told stories of the working poor, exposing (making known) the realities of life in the slums (poor neighborhoods) and working conditions in the factories. One of Dickens' most well-known novels, *Oliver Twist*, whose main character was a young orphan, told a tale of the problems of poverty and child labor. In addition to Dickens, other European and American authors also took up the work of social criticism, addressing many of the problems of industrial societies. The French novelist Emile Zola wrote about the mining industry and about conflict between the rich and the poor in *Germinal*. Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen described the problems facing women in *A Doll's House* and environmental problems in *An Enemy of the People*. Of the group of American Realists known as Muckrakers, the most well-known is Upton Sinclair, whose 1906 novel *The Jungle* exposed the evils of the meatpacking industry and led to new laws that improved safety in the workplace and the quality of meat that could be sold. The work of the Realists served to raise awareness of the issues created by industrialization.

Excerpt from American writer Upton Sinclair's The Jungle, 1906, which described the lives of immigrant workers in the American meatpacking industry:

...There were the men in the pickle rooms, for instance, where old Antanas had gotten his death; scarce [hardly] a one of these that had not some spot of horror on his person. Let a man so much as scrape his finger pushing a truck in the pickle rooms, and he might have a sore that would put him out of the world; all the joints of his fingers might be eaten by the acid, one by one. Of the butchers and floorsmen, the beef boners and trimmers, and all those who used knives, you could scarcely find a person who had the use of his thumb; time and time again the base of it had been slashed [cut], till it was a mere [nothing more than] lump of flesh against which the man pressed the knife to hold it. The hands of these men would be criss-crossed with cuts, until you could no longer pretend to count them or to trace them... Worst of any, however, were the fertilizer men, and those who served in the cooking rooms. These people could not be shown to the visitor—for the odor [smell] of a fertilizer man would scare away any ordinary visitor at a hundred yards, and as for the other men, who worked in tank rooms full of steam, and in some of which there were open vats [large pots] near the level of the floor, their peculiar [special] trouble was that they fell into the vats; and when they were fished out, there was never enough of them left to be worth exhibiting [showing] – sometimes they would be overlooked for days, till all but the bones of them had gone out to the world as Durham's Pure Leaf Lard!...

Excerpt from French writer Emile Zola's Germinal, 1885:

What! Wasn't the worker allowed to think for himself? That was exactly why things were going to change soon, because the worker was beginning to think now! In the old chap's [man's] day the miner lived in the mine like an animal, like a coal-extracting [coal-removing] machine, and being underground, his ears and eyes were closed to events outside. And the wealthy ruling classes found it quite simple to agree among themselves to buy and sell him and live on his flesh, while he himself didn't even know what they were up to. But now the miner was waking up under the ground, germinating [beginning to grow] in the earth like good seed, and one fine morning you would see him springing up like corn in the fields; yes, men would spring up, an army of men to bring justice [fairness] back into the world.

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INDIVIDUAL REPORT

Compare and contrast the art and literature of the Romantic and Realist movements.

Evaluation Criteria:

- Response demonstrates an understanding of both the Romantic and Realist artistic and literary movements.
- Response includes at least three comparisons (similarities) and at least three contrasts (differences) between the Romantic and Realist movements.
- Response includes reference to at least three specific artists and/or works of art (paintings or photography) and to at least three specific writers and/or works of literature (poems or novels).
- Response discusses whether the Industrial Revolution was a problem, progress, or a promise.