

Year 6 Knowledge Organiser History – Victorian Classrooms

Vocabulary

1	monarchy		A form of a government with a monarch (king or queen) at the head.
2	empire		A large group of states or countries ruled over by a single monarch or a sovereign state.
3	era		A time frame in history.
4	Industrial Revolution		A time of great change in Britain between 1760-1900. Shifting to mass production of products.
5	child labour		Employment of children in a business or industry.
6	poverty		The lack of basic human needs such as clean water, food, healthcare, education and shelter.
7	Charity school		Schools built and maintained by the voluntary contributions from churches to teach poor children to read and write.
8	obedience		Following an order, request or law based on another's authority.
9	compulsory		Required by law or rule.
10	reform		To make changes in something (especially an institution or practice) to improve it.

The Legal Acts

1	1833 Factory Act (applied to large textile factories)		Banned children under 9 from working, 2 hours education a day for children under 11, lowered working hours.
2	1842 Mines Act		Banned boys under 10, women and girls from working in mines.
3	1844 Factory Act		3 hours education a day for children under 13, lowered working hours.
4	1870 Education Act 1880 Education Act 1891 Education act		The first piece of legislation to deal specifically with the provision of education in England and Wales. It campaigned for free, compulsory and non-religious education for all children. The bill showed a commitment to education for all children across the country. This made school attendance compulsory between the ages of five and ten. This introduced free basic education in England and Wales by providing government funding for each child.

Key Features of Victorian education

Discipline		Rules in Victorian schools were strict. Corporal punishment (punishment involving hitting or striking someone) was allowed and children could be caned (being hit by a wooden rod) if they broke the school rules. Children followed set patterns of behaviour called 'drills'.
Rote Learning		Lessons involved much repetition and children were taught subjects that would be of use to them in their future work such as reading, writing and arithmetic (mental maths) known as the 'three Rs'.
Inequality		Wealthy children were often taught at home by a governess (a woman employed in a private household to educate children). Wealthy boys were sometimes sent to public school and girls were taught skills such as cooking, sewing and how to play musical instruments at home. Children from poorer communities often worked in factories and on farms. From 1833, they could attend school for 2 hours.
Classroom		Desks were bolted to the floor in rows facing the front. High windows stopped pupils looking outside. There were rarely any posters or decoration on the walls. There was no electric lighting and gas lamps made the rooms gloomy and stuffy. Classes were overcrowded, sometimes with over 100 pupils. Pupils wrote with chalk on a slate tablet because this was cheaper than paper and could be reused.