

Task 7 – Read the transcript

The Flemish Weavers were the first to set up a textile trade in Manchester, and Manchester became a small centre therefore, for textiles. After this immigration boomed – Flemish, Armenians, Irish, Jewish, people from Pakistan, India, East Africa, Iran, Poland and Spain – all contributed to Manchester as a city.

Due to continued persecution in Belgium there was a second wave of Flemish weavers. This time the material they produced was fustian – a combination of linen and cotton. The result was that cotton-based products were established in Manchester. This is really where the story of Manchester as a city begins because the wealth of Manchester is based on the growth of cotton.

As you can see, before 1785, people did most of their weaving on a hand loom at home. Everything was done by hand. Not so obvious is that one of the main reasons Manchester grew as a textile centre was the weather. It is the dampness brought by the climate that reduces the chances of the material breaking up as it is made into textile.

The population at this time was about 4000 to 6000 people, and Manchester was itself a small pretty town where people came to buy their wool and cotton clothing. However, it was now that the Industrial Revolution began and Manchester started to change very very quickly. England went from being an agricultural society to a mass production society. The centre of this dramatic change was Manchester with an Industrial Revolution associated with the production of cotton on a massive scale.

There were 4 significant inventions all of which meant that cotton could be produce stronger thread more rapidly. Each of these important inventions was a development of the previous one to make machines that were more efficient. They were invented in a short period time but represented a huge change in the cotton industry and, as capitalism demands, the production process got faster and faster.

Due to such inventions, cotton production moved from the home to huge factories. These are also called Mills. This slide shows 3 massive factories in Manchester. From initially working from home, the lives of the people working in factories also changed dramatically. Now people worked long hours with supervisors making sure that they didn't stop working.

The many inventions and the growth of cotton mills changed the place where people worked. In a short period of time, not only have the machines become more efficient, they have also increased in size. Child labour increased.

Can you see the child beneath the machine? A child is small therefore can clean the machines from below, even though the machine is constantly moving backwards and forwards. Many children were maimed and injured.

From this picture you also get a clear idea of the hot, noisy conditions inside the factories. Many workers became deaf, they couldn't speak to each other. Not only that but the dust produced meant that workers suffered from lung diseases.

The rapid growth of industrialisation also changed the place you lived in. In this slide you can see Manchester Cathedral in the background. Manchester now had a population of 75000. As the Mills got bigger and bigger, the badly constructed houses where people lived got smaller and smaller.

You can imagine the consequence. Much of the sewage produced got into the water supply. The result was cholera. A disease that was once rare was now widespread.