

*America Gears Up
Journal*



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America Gears Up Journal



Directions:

Respond to the following as you finish the lessons in this unit.

- ☞ In the **Take a Position** section for each lesson take a position on the question(s) in the section. Use information from the lesson to convince the reader that your position is justified.

Write your position responses to the first two items based on the following rubric:

Complete Response	Partial Response	Incomplete or No Response
<p>The response...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> took a position, provided enough information to convince the reader of the position taken and the information was accurate. 	<p>The response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> took a position, but there was inadequate information to convince the reader and/or the information provided had some inaccuracies. 	<p>The response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> failed to take a position and/or provided little or no information or the information was inaccurate.

- ☞ In the **Prepare for the Unit Project** section, list the information from the lesson that you think will be important for the final project for this unit.

Lesson 1: From the Farm to the Factory

Take a Position

1. Were people's lives better or worse after this period in United States history?

2. Is progress good?

Prepare for the Unit Project

Journal Sample Responses

Students might suggest the following answers in their journal. Supporting evidence might vary widely from the suggested answers.

Lesson 1: From the Farm to the Factory

Take a Position

1. Were people's lives better or worse after this period in United States history?

Better:

People's lives were better. Most people lived on farms before the Industrial Revolution, where they had to make everything for themselves. As machines began to make most things, people could have more and better made items. The new factories provided new jobs allowing people to work at jobs other than farming. Transportation increased, which allowed people to be less isolated.

Worse:

People's lives were worse. Most people were farmers before the Industrial Revolution occurred. Their lives were very simple. They basically made everything that they needed and didn't depend on others. Machines changed this simplicity. Although people may have had more things, they now had to buy the items. People left the independent life on the farm to work in factories. Life in the factories was worse than on the farm. They worked long hours in boring jobs rather than outside growing things on the farm.

3. Is progress good?

Yes:

The progression from agriculture to industry changed life in America in a positive way. People had more and better possessions. They had more alternatives as to making a living and to places to live, like cities. Women, for the first time could work outside the farm and have some independence. New machines made tasks that were difficult before easier and new inventions provided new alternatives not known before the Industrial Revolution.

No:

Life was simple and more rewarding prior to the Industrial Revolution. Progress often brings bad things that make life more difficult. If the negative things outweigh the positive things, then progress can be bad. For example, if the factory workers had to survive poor working conditions and died younger so that people could have more and cheaper things, was it worth the sacrifice? If the environment is polluted to get these same things, is it worth the consequences to earth?

Prepare for the Unit Project

- Change from agriculture to factories
- Change in society
 - New members of the middle class- factory owners and managers
 - New members of lower class – factory workers
- Money necessary to own new manufactured goods
- Losers: Factory workers worked long hours in poor conditions for poor pay
- Winners: Factory owners and managers reaped the profits
- Almost everyone benefited from new manufactured products, but some more than others

Lesson 2: Big Business—Monkey Business

Take a Position

1. Who were the winners and losers from the creation of “Big Businesses?”

The winners were the people that owned the businesses and the middle class and the losers were the workers, although everyone got something out of the situation. The creation of “Big Businesses” made lots of money for the owners and for the people that ran the businesses, the middle class. Money allowed these people to live well. The products of these businesses were produced due to the work of laborers, but these laborers didn’t get much in return. All of society benefited from some of the products of these businesses, like the ability to move distances by rail, heating and lighting with oil, and more and better things made out of steel.

Prepare for the Unit Project

- Rise of big business increased the power of a few over the rest of society.
- Majority of wealth held by a small percentage of population
- Big business practices aimed at eliminating competition
- Big Business powers and wealth comes at the expense the labor
- Big Business’ power rivals U.S. government’s
- Government steps in with laws to limit power of corporations

Lesson 3: Labor Pains

Take a Position

1. How did labor win and lose at the same time?

Labor had always been the loser during this part of the Industrial Revolution. All workers, including women and children, worked long hours in poor working conditions without sharing in the profits for their efforts. All of society benefited from the products and services created by industry, but for the most part, the negatives for labor out weighted the benefits of these new things.

2. Did labor’s situation get reconciled during this period?

Public opinion and government feelings usually aligned with “Big Business” not labor during this period. The conditions began to change for labor as they used the strike and bargaining, as well as government regulations and laws to get better working conditions and more pay. Child labor and length of workweek laws provided some relief for labor, but life was still difficult and great changes in their situation were not to come until the 20th century.

Prepare for the Unit Project

- Labor appears to be the losers in the Industrial Revolution
- Business owners, the government, and the public seemed to be against them
- Labor began to organize into unions
- Through the use of strikes and bargaining, labor was able to improve some of the poor conditions
- Public opinion and government regulation of business began to change in the favor of labor at the beginning of the 20th century

Lesson 4: Inventing a New Life

Take a Position

2. Do inventions improve or complicate lives?

Improve:

Inventions, like the ones found in this lesson, provide society with a better way of doing things. In the majority of cases the new product or service improves the quality of life for the users. For example, the telephone allowed people to talk and communicate over distances that created a more informed population and enhanced business. The electric light was an improvement over gas light by being safer and more economical. All of the inventions that were studied help society progress during this time.

Complicate:

Although most of the inventions studied in this lesson probably improved the users lives, in many cases they also complicated their existence. Many people could not use inventions, like the sewing machine, the telephone, electricity and the electric light because they were too expensive. This fact caused a larger gap between the poor and the rich. Life can seem much more difficult if part of society benefits from improvements brought about by these inventions, while the rest cannot afford them.

3. What was the most important invention of this period?

*Answers will vary for this question. An example of a response is as follows:

Electricity was the most important invention of this period. This one invention probably changed society the most during this period. Electricity, combined with the light bulb, lit up what had been dark or poorly lit. Life could now go on after dark. Electricity became an efficient power source for many machines from locomotives to factories to appliances. The abundance around us today has electricity as its foundation.

Prepare for the Unit Project

- Inventions changed the way society lived.
- Everyone could not afford many of the inventions.
 - The people with money could afford the new inventions and all of the benefits that came with them.
 - The poor people, like factory workers, might not be able to afford the inventions, thus not getting of the benefits.
- This situation contributed to society having winners and losers.