



'Conditions in the cotton mills in the 18th and 19th Centuries were awful'.

How far do you agree with this statement? Use the sources from your sheet and other knowledge you have to support and explain your answer.

<p>Source 1</p> 	<p>I never saw a single instance of corporal punishment inflicted on a child. The children seemed to be always cheerful and alert, taking pleasure in using their muscles. The work of these lively elves seemed to resemble a sport. Conscious of their skill, they were delighted to show it off to any stranger. At the end of the day they showed no sign of being exhausted.</p> <p>Written by Andrew Ure who supported the employment of children in factories.</p>
<p>Source 4</p> <p>Although these children were well fed, their limbs were generally deformed, their growth was stunted.... I came to the conclusion that the children were being injured by being taken into the mills at an early age and employed for so many hours; therefore, as soon as I had it in my power, I put an end to a system which appeared to me to be so injurious [bad].</p> <p>Robert Owen, the owner of a mill in New Lanark in Scotland.</p>	 <p>This picture appeared in a book called 'The History of Manufacture on Great Britain', published in 1835. The author was Edward Baines who often defended the mill owners and how they ran their cotton mills.</p> <p>The children are well fed - they get oatmeal porridge with milk twice a day, barley broth for dinner and either beef or cheese. Those under nine years do not work at all.</p> <p>Adapted from an account written by William Lockheart in 1795.</p>

I believe that conditions in most factories were appalling in the 18th and 19th century. I think this because of many factors and the impacts that it has caused. Many children have suffered from all kinds of illnesses and even death because of their employment. The terrible thing is they don't even get a fair wage for what they're doing, including risking their lives. This just shows that they are taken advantage of because the owners know that the children don't know what their pay should be. Another contributing factor to this is that without the children more than a quarter of the product made would be lost because many children's jobs are to crawl under the machines and collect the fallen cotton. Although there are many negatives there are a few positives.

Some crucial evidence to back this up is a statement by Robert Owen, he claims that he once owned a mill in New Lanark, Scotland run by young children. He said that after seeing what harm the working environment did to the young children he put a stop to the system and now no longer takes in people at an early age of life. He claimed that the children were always well fed and looked after but between the long shifts and the jobs they were doing they were developing deformed limbs, breathing problems and many others so he put a stop to the system at his factory. Even though this shows a conscientious effort to help the children and their employees it wasn't enough because many were still receiving injuries and even death.

On the other hand, there were also many cases where the children were treated like humans and were fed twice a day and were treated with respect and were cared for, some factories didn't allow children to work if they were under nine years old. This just shows that whilst there are people and factories that don't care about the wellbeing of their employees, others do. Despite all of this effort, children were still risking lives and receiving injuries this is why I think that children should not have been employed at all to work in the factories.

A statement written by Andrew Ure who supported the industry of Child employment, claims that he always saw the children in a happy manor and always proud of what they did, showing off their skills to strangers. He also stated that at the end of the day they were always full of energy and never out of breath. He shows the children in a good way and it appears to inflict a sense of "everything is ok" when in actual fact we know that children are mistreated, and harmed. This leads me to believe that this source is one-sided and doesn't have two views. Furthermore, I know that even though this factory might treat its employees like this, not all do this is evident in the many sources that contradict each other like source 3 and source 2, they are both in different factories and both have different rules and ways of running the factory and looking after the employees.

In conclusion, I think that children should not have been working in the factories in the 18th and 19th century; it caused them so much harm, destroyed lives and caused many deaths. They were used and taken advantage of; they were not aware of the danger, financial or safety problems involved, they didn't even get a fair pay for the amount of work they were doing. Although I do see why they needed to work because they were bringing in money for their family especially in the working class who would've needed it but it should not have included risking their lives.