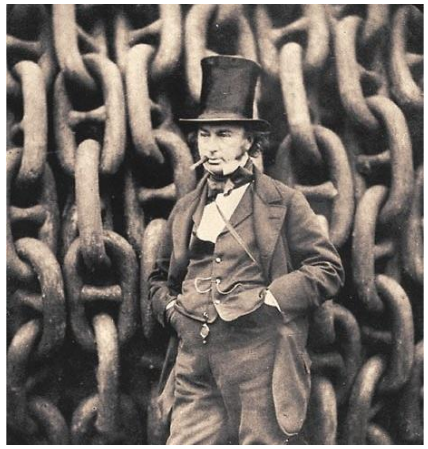
Vocabulary	Definition
Victorian era	The period when Queen Victoria ruled Britain (1837–1901).
monarch	A king or queen who rules a country.
Industrial Revolution	A time when machines and factories changed how people worked and lived.
industrial	The growth of factories and machines to make goods.
invention	Something new that someone has created.
engineer	Someone who designs or builds machines, structures or systems.
steam engine	A machine that uses steam to produce movement.
railway	A track along which trains travel.
factory	A building where goods are made, often using machines.
urbanisation	The movement of people from the countryside to the towns and cities.
child labour	Work done by children, often in difficult or dangerous conditions.
workhouse	A place where poor people received basic food and shelter in return for work.
chimney sweep	A person who cleans soot from chimneys.
poverty	Not having enough money or basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter.
reform	A change made to improve something.
Factory Act	A law introduced to improve conditions for factory workers.
education	The process of learning knowledge and skills.
class system	The division of society into groups based on wealth and social positions.
punishment	A consequence given for breaking a rule or law.
legacy	What someone is remembered for after they have gone.

Key Figures

Isambard Kingdom Brunel
English civil engineer





Queen Victoria
Queen of the United Kingdom

Angela Burdett-Coutts
Philanthropist and social reformer



How did life change for children during the Victorian Period?



Date	Event
1837	Queen Victoria becomes Queen.
1838	Brunel's Great Western Railway opens its first section.
1842	Mines Act bans women and girls, and boys under 10, from working underground.
1847	Factory Act limits working hours for women and young people in textile mills.
1870	Education Act creates a framework for expanding elementary schools.
1880	School attendance becomes compulsory for children aged 5–10 in England and Wales.
1891	Elementary education becomes free in state-funded schools.
1901	Queen Victoria dies, ending the Victorian era.

Many poor Victorian children worked in dangerous factories and mines. New laws gradually protected children from harmful work and made school attendance compulsory for ages 5–10 by 1880.

Factories, steam engines and railways transformed how people lived, worked and travelled. Many people moved from the countryside to growing towns and cities.