

PRINTED NOTICE ABOUT MEETING TO DISCUSS FACTORY BILL, 1843

REFERENCE: SANT/BEQ/28/1/5/134 | SUGGESTED AGE GROUPS: KS3, KS4, LIFELONG LEARNERS | TOPIC AREAS: VICTORIANS, INDUSTRIAL
REVOLUTION, HISTORY OF CHILDHOOD

In 1840 Parliament set up the Children's Employment Commission. The aim of the Commission was to investigate the working conditions of children under the age of 18. As well as reporting on the conditions of children working in mines, the Commission also questioned children working in factories.

Many children were interviewed for the Commission. They were asked about their working hours, the conditions, if they had been ill and if they could read and write. The Commission found that many of the children did not go to school. Lots of the children that they talked to could not read and write properly.

Sir James Graham put a Bill before parliament (made a suggestion for an Act) that would set up schools for children working in factories and make sure that children had the time to go to lessons. This Bill, which is mentioned in the notice, was not made into law.

This poster asks people to come to a meeting to sign a petition against the Bill.

OTHER ONLINE RESOURCES

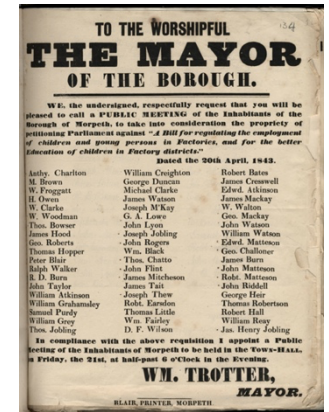
British Library website, page about "The Life and Adventures of Michael Armstrong, the Factory Boy": <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-life-and-adventures-of-michael-armstrong-the-factory-boy>

British Library website, page about "Factory Children. A Short Description of the factory system": <https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/factory-children-a-short-description-of-the-factory-system>

PRINTED NOTICE ABOUT MEETING TO DISCUSS FACTORY BILL, 1843

TOPIC: VICTORIANS, INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION, HISTORY OF CHILDHOOD

SUBJECT AREAS: HISTORY, LITERACY, POLITICS, TECHNOLOGY



Background	Activity	Resources
<p>In 1840 Parliament set up the Children's Employment Commission. The aim of the Commission was to investigate the working conditions of children under the age of 18. As well as reporting on the conditions of children working in mines, the Commission also questioned children working in factories.</p>	<p>See: When did Parliament set up the Children's Employment Commission?</p> <p>See: What was the aim of the Children's Employment Commission?</p> <p>See: Who did the Commission interview?</p> <p>See: What types of questions did the Commission ask?</p> <p>See: What were the findings of the Commission's interviews?</p>	<p>https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/factory-children-a-short-description-of-the-factory-system</p> <p>https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-life-and-adventures-of-michael-armstrong-the-factory-boy</p> <p>https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/report-on-child-labour-1842</p>
	<p>Think: Why was the Children's Employment Commission set up?</p> <p>Think: Why were children used as factory workers?</p> <p>Think: What types of jobs did the children do in factories?</p> <p>Think: What types of conditions did the children work in?</p> <p>Think: What types of backgrounds do you think the children who worked in factories came from?</p>	<p>https://mediaspace.baylor.edu/channel/Victorian%2Bpoetry%253A%2BCry%2Bof%2Bthe%2BChildren%2BExhibition/87020132</p> <p>https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/43725/the-cry-of-the-children</p>



	<p>Think: Why couldn't many of the children read or write?</p> <p>Think: How much do you think the children earned?</p> <p>Think: Do you think any changes were made because of the Children's Employment Commission?</p>	<p>https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/a-voice-from-the-factories-a-poem-by-caroline-norton-about-19th-century-child-labour</p> <p>https://www.bl.uk/works/the-cry-of-the-children</p> <p>https://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/norton/avftf/avftf.html</p>
<p>Sir James Graham put a Bill before parliament (made a suggestion for an Act) that would set up schools for children working in factories and</p>	<p>See: Who put the factory Bill before Parliament?</p> <p>See: What does it mean to put a Bill before Parliament?</p>	<p>https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/factory-children-a-short-description-of-the-factory-system</p>



<p>make sure that children had the time to go to lessons. This Bill, which is mentioned in the notice, was not made into law.</p>	<p>See: What did the factory Bill propose to do?</p> <p>See: Was the Bill made into law?</p>	<p>https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/the-life-and-adventures-of-michael-armstrong-the-factory-boy</p>
	<p>Think: Why did the inhabitants of Morpeth want the Mayor to call a public meeting?</p> <p>Think: What would the inhabitants of Morpeth have discussed at the meeting?</p> <p>Think: Do you think the inhabitants of Morpeth would have been for or against the Bill?</p> <p>Think: Why did so many people sign the printed notice asking for the meeting to take place?</p> <p>Think: Why do you think Sir James Graham’s Bill was not made into law?</p>	<p>https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/report-on-child-labour-1842</p> <p>https://mediaspace.baylor.edu/channel/Victorian%2BPoetry%253A%2BCry%2Bof%2Bthe%2BChildren%2BExhibition/87020132</p>
	<p>Do: In groups, re-enact Sir James Graham putting the Bill before Parliament and debate the Bill. Who might have been present? What might Sir James have said? Who might have been for the Bill and who might have been against it? What would their reasons have been?</p> <p>Do: Research the conditions of children working in factories in the early 1840s. Create your own Bill with what you think the priorities for change should have been.</p> <p>Do: Imagine you attended the meeting in Morpeth to discuss the factory Bill. Write a newspaper article about the meeting. Consider what might have prompted the meeting, what might have been discussed and what the outcomes may have been.</p>	

	<p>Do: Watch the videos made by Baylor University for the “Cry of the Children” exhibition. Create your own video highlighting the experiences of one of the interviewed children.</p>	
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