



## INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

During colonial times, most Americans lived in the same place that they worked, which was usually on a farm. People used simple tools to make goods by hand. They made household items, furniture, clothing and farm equipment. In the mid-1700s, the way goods were made began to change. It began in Britain, as more machines replaced handmade items.

As a result, many people moved to cities to work in mills, rather than out of their homes or on farms. This period in history, known as the **Industrial Revolution**, began in the mid-1700s and came to the United States around 1800. The changes began first in New England. Since the soil was not ideal there, it was easier for people to give up on farming and find other ways to make a living. New England also had many streams and rivers, which provided water power to run machines and factories. There were also many ports in this region, which made shipping goods easier.

1. What was the Industrial Revolution?

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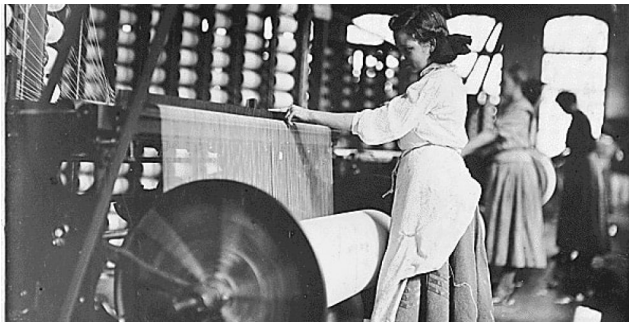
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2. How did New England's physical geography support the growth of industries?

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### The Rise of Factories



In 1790 Congress passed a new patent law to protect the rights of inventors. A **patent** gives an inventor the legal right to make money from an invention for a certain period of time. In Britain, similar laws were passed. Workers would sometimes smuggle secrets about inventions out of the country, such as **Samuel Slater**. He memorized the design of the machines used in British factories and then built copies of them in the United States to make cotton thread. Slater's mill

marked an important step in the Industrial Revolution in the United States.

**Francis Cabot Lowell** improved on Slater's mill in 1814. Lowell's Massachusetts textile, or cloth, factory not only made thread, it also wove the thread into cloth. Lowell began the factory system, where all manufacturing steps are combined in one place.

3. Examine the picture of the "Lowell Girls" above. How do you think life was different for them than for those living and working on a farm?

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## New Technology

Technology was an important part of the Industrial Revolution. There were new machines to make cloth, like the **spinning jenny** which spun thread. The power loom wove thread into cloth, rather than by hand like it was previously done. These inventions saved time and money.



In 1793, Eli Whitney invented the **cotton gin**. The word “gin” was short for “engine.” The cotton gin made it easy and fast to remove the seeds from cotton plants. This invention greatly increased the demand for more cotton.

Whitney later accepted the task of making 10,000 muskets in just two years for the government. At that time, muskets were made by hand, one unique piece at a time, by a skilled craftsman. Whitney made each part in large numbers, identical to others of its type. This idea of **interchangeable parts** changed manufacturing forever, making it faster, easier and cheaper for an untrained person to build and assemble various items beyond the musket.

4. Describe how inventions such as the spinning jenny and the cotton gin impacted the growth of industry.

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5. How did interchangeable parts make manufacturing faster and cheaper?

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## Free Enterprise and the Growth of Agriculture

In **capitalism**, individual businesses own property and decide how to use it. The people- not the government- control capital (the buildings, land, machines, money and other resources used to create wealth). The term **free enterprise** is also used to describe this American economic system. This means that people are free to work wherever they wish and to buy, sell and produce whatever they want. While many New Englanders chose to work in factories in the early 1800s, most other Americans still lived and worked on farms. In the Northeast, farms were small, so a family could do all of the necessary work. Farmers in that region usually sold their produce locally.

In the South, cotton production rose sharply. The demand for cotton grew steadily as textile factories appeared. In addition, the cotton gin allowed planters to grow cotton over a much wider area, now that it was faster to remove the seeds and process the harvested plant. Southern farmers seeking new land moved west to plant the valuable crop. Between 1790 and 1820, cotton production soared from 3,000 to 300,000 bales per year in the South.

The success and spread of cotton create a huge demand for enslaved workers. Trade in enslaved Africans expanded. Between 1790 and 1810, the number of enslaved Africans in the U.S. rose from about 700,000 to 1.2 million.

6. Explain how the cotton gin had a significant impact on the South.

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