

Preview Unit Goals

TEXT ANALYSIS

- Understand the historical and cultural context of the Victorian era
- Identify and analyze characteristics of realism and naturalism in fiction
- Identify and analyze point of view and plot structure in fiction
- Identify and analyze rhyme scheme and rhythm in poetry
- Identify and analyze speaker, mood, and tone in poetry
- Determine themes or central ideas of a text
- Identify, analyze, and evaluate persuasive techniques

READING

- Make inferences and draw conclusions
- Compare, contrast, and synthesize ideas

WRITING AND LANGUAGE

- Write an analytical essay
- Add descriptive details, choose effective settings, and establish voice
- Use rhetorical questions and interrogative sentences

VOCABULARY

- Use context clues and affixes to help determine the meaning of unfamiliar words
- Consult general reference materials to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning, its part of speech, its etymology, or its standard usage

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

- analyze
- impact
- scheme
- dominate
- resource

MEDIA AND VIEWING

- Evaluate the presentation of social and cultural messages in media
- Evaluate the interactions of different techniques used in multi-layered media
- Evaluate how audience, bias, and purpose influence the representation of an issue or event, including changes in formality and tone
- Create a power presentation

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The Victorians

1832–1901



Elizabeth Barrett Browning



AN ERA OF RAPID CHANGE

- The Influence of Romanticism
- Realism in Fiction
- Victorian Viewpoints

Media  Smart DVD-ROM

Great Stories on Film

Discover how visual and sound techniques combine to capture the driving motion of Britain's Industrial Revolution. Page 1050

UNIT 5

Questions of the Times

DISCUSS After reading these questions and talking about them with a partner, discuss them with the class as a whole. Then read on to explore the ways in which writers of the Victorian period dealt with the same issues.

When is progress a **PROBLEM?**

England was the first nation to industrialize, and it made enormous strides during this period. Factories made more goods available to more people than ever before, and middle-class Victorians readily consumed these goods. At the same time, changes in working conditions and social structure led to a breakdown of communities, a rise in materialistic attitudes, and the creation of a class of poverty-stricken urban workers. Is progress always worth its price?

Can values be **IMPOSED?**

Many Victorians—among them the writer Rudyard Kipling and Queen Victoria herself—proudly supported imperialism, believing they were bringing the gift of English civilization to less civilized cultures. Bloody rebellions, however, proved that the colonized peoples did not share their view. Do you think a nation can or should impose its values on other people?



RL.9 Demonstrate knowledge of foundational works of literature, including how two or more texts from the same period treat similar themes or topics. **RI.9** Analyze documents of historical and literary significance for their themes, purposes, and rhetorical features.

Is it better to escape or face REALITY?

Writers of this period were not unified in outlook. Early poets ignored the everyday realities of their society in favor of more poetic subjects. In contrast, many novelists and critics reflected and recorded their society as it was—warts and all. Yet by the end of the period, more and more readers turned to literature to escape from the problems of the day. Do you prefer literature that reflects your world or that takes you away from it all?

Why do people fear CHANGE?

The Victorian period was a time of rapid change—exciting yet troubling. Many Victorians felt as though the rug of their familiar world had been pulled out from under them. While some embraced change, others despaired for their society. Why do you think people resist change? What is the best way to live in a world where everything seems unpredictable?



The Victorians

1832–1901

An Era of Rapid Change

During Queen Victoria's reign, England went from horse-drawn carriages to motor cars, from rule by aristocrats to votes for every man, from a land of farmers to a land of factories. England also actively embraced imperialism as the country's destiny and duty to the world. Yet as their country changed in unexpected ways, the English moved from happy confidence in progress to increasing doubt. Some writers turned away from the new reality; others tackled it head-on.



The Victorians: Historical Context

Victorian writers responded to the economic, social, and political changes sweeping England during Victoria's reign.

A Time of Growth and Change

“The sun never sets on the British Empire,” boasted the Victorians, and it was true: with holdings around the globe, from Africa to India, Ireland to New Zealand, and Hong Kong to Canada, it was always daytime in some part of the vast territory ruled by Britain. More than just a simple fact, however, this phrase captured the attitude of an era. During the reign of Queen Victoria, England was a nation in motion. “This is a world of action, and not for moping and droning in,” said Victorian novelist **Charles Dickens**, and his contemporaries seemed to agree.

During this period, England was at the height of its power, both politically and economically. Abroad, Britain dominated world politics. At home, the Industrial Revolution was in full swing. With its new factories turning out goods of every kind at an unprecedented pace, England became known as “the workshop of the world.” For those with wealth and influence—including the burgeoning middle class—it was an expansive time, a time of energy and vitality, a time of rapid and dramatic change. Yet large segments of the population suffered greatly during this period. Many writers decried the injustice, rapid pace, and materialism of the age—including poet **Matthew Arnold**, who referred to “[t]his strange disease of modern life, with its sick hurry, its divided aims.”

Monarchy in the Modern Style

This period of change is named after the person who, more than any other, stood for the age: **Queen Victoria**. Just 18 years old when she was crowned in 1837, she went on to rule for 63 years, 7 months, and 2 days—the longest reign in English history. Victoria's devotion to hard work and duty, her insistence on proper behavior, and her unapologetic support of British imperialism became hallmarks of the Victorian period.

Victoria was well aware of how previous monarchs had clashed with Parliament and made themselves unpopular with their arrogant, inflexible attitudes. She realized that the role of royalty had to change. Pragmatically accepting the idea of a constitutional monarchy in which she gave advice rather than orders, Victoria yielded control of day-to-day governmental affairs to a series of very talented prime ministers: Lord Melbourne, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmerston, and the rival politicians Benjamin Disraeli and William E. Gladstone. The position of prime minister assumed even greater importance after the death of Victoria's beloved husband, Prince Albert, in 1861; grief-stricken, the queen withdrew from politics and spent the rest of her life in mourning.

COMMON CORE

RL 9 Demonstrate knowledge of foundational works of literature, including how two or more texts from the period treat similar themes or topics. **RI 9** Analyze documents of historical and literary significance for their themes and purposes. **L 1a** Apply the understanding that usage is a matter of convention, can change over time, and is sometimes contested.

▶ TAKING NOTES

Outlining As you read this introduction, use an outline to record main ideas about the history and literature of this period. You can use headings, boldfaced terms, and the information in boxes like this one as starting points. (See page R49 in the **Research Handbook** for more help with outlining.)

1. Historical Context

A. Growth and Change

1. The British Empire expands.

2. Britain dominates world politics.

3. Industrial Revolution continues.

4. Wealth and prosperity grow, but so does suffering.

B. Monarchy

Progress, Problems, and Reform

The Industrial Revolution had already transformed England into a modern industrial state by the time Victoria took the throne. By 1850, England boasted 18,000 cotton mills and produced half the iron in the world.

MIDDLE-CLASS PROSPERITY The Industrial Revolution created vast new wealth for England's rapidly growing middle class. This material progress was celebrated in the Great Exhibition of 1851, the purpose of which was to display "the Works of Industry of All Nations." Housed in an enormous, glittering glass-and-steel building called the Crystal Palace, the Exhibition showcased every marvel of the age: indoor toilets, telegraphs, power looms, electric lights, even a full-size locomotive—17,000 exhibits in all.

For the middle class who ran the factories, all these inventions represented both a means of making money and a dazzling array of goods to spend it on. Middle-class Victorians enjoyed indulging themselves in displays of wealth, from top hats and ruffled dresses to large houses crammed with heavy, ornate furniture and fancy knickknacks. With the help of servants, hostesses vied to serve the most lavish feasts and—insecure in their new respectability—tried to outdo each other in displaying refined manners and behavior.

Some writers, such as **Thomas Babington Macaulay**, expressed enthusiasm for the material advantages afforded by the industrial age. Others, such as **Thomas Carlyle** and **William Morris**, were appalled by Victorian materialism, which they saw as tasteless, joyless, and destructive of community. Likewise, the virtuous airs adopted by the middle class, who often had trouble living up to their own uncompromising moral standards, led to angry charges of hypocrisy.

THE DOWNSIDE OF PROGRESS While the middle class was becoming more prosperous, conditions for the poor grew more intolerable. Factory workers spent 16-hour days toiling for low wages under harsh and dangerous conditions. Children, especially, suffered. Five-year-olds worked in the cotton mills as scavengers, crawling under the moving machinery to pick up bits of cotton from the floor, or in the coal mines, dragging heavy tubs of coal through narrow tunnels. Paid just a few cents a day, child workers endured empty bellies, frequent beatings, and air so filled with dust that they could hardly breathe.

To make matters worse, in the 1840s unemployment in England soared, leaving many families without a breadwinner. In addition, the potato blight and famine that devastated Ireland in 1845 forced 2 million starving people to emigrate. Many crowded into England's already squalid slums.

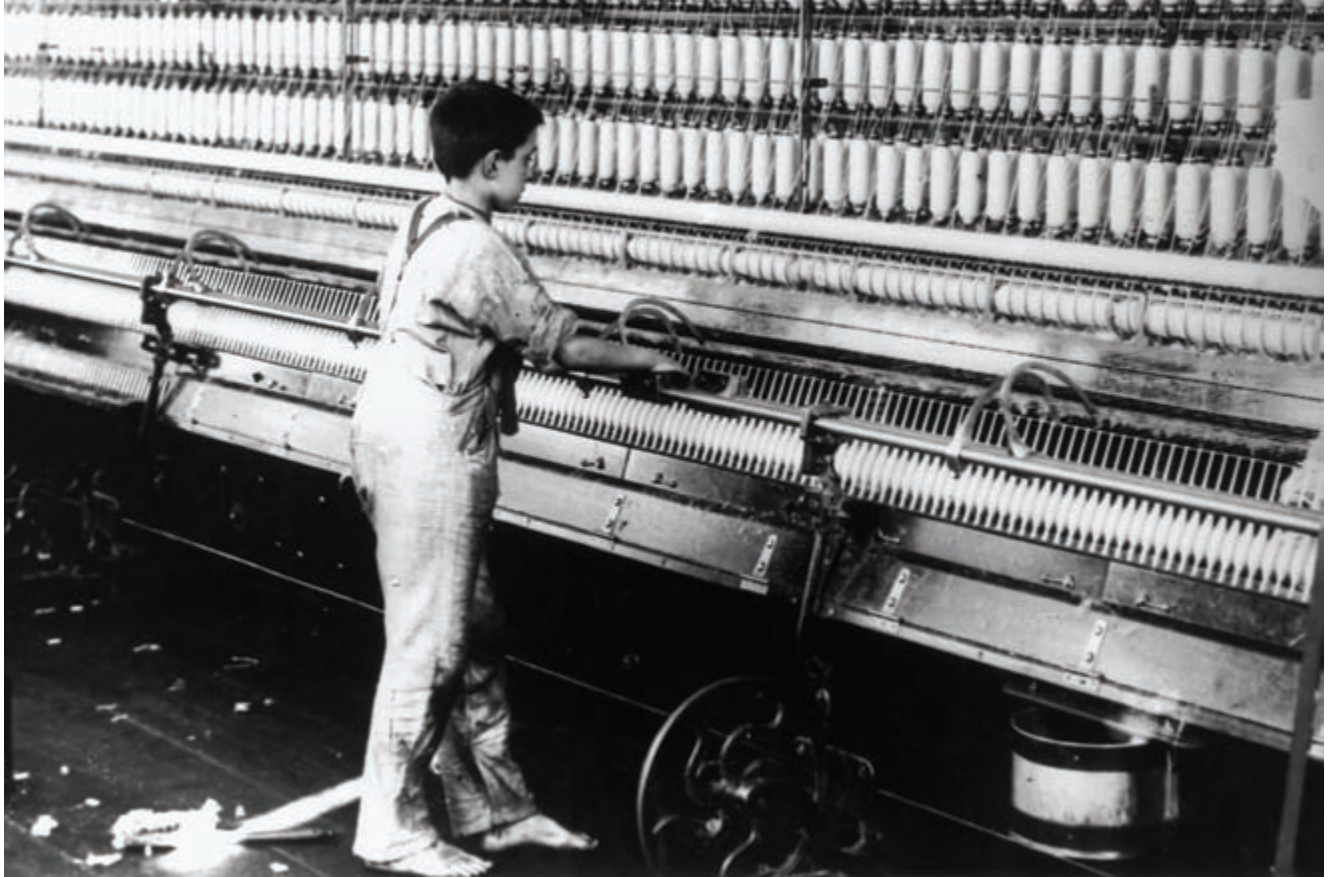
A CHANGING LANGUAGE

The Birth of Standard English

In Victorian times, as education spread and people entering the middle class tried to speak "proper" English, the English language became more homogeneous. Increased literacy also stabilized English, since the written language tends to change more slowly than the spoken. The period also saw the beginning of an effort to compile a definitive record of the histories, uses, and meanings of English words, resulting in the massive *Oxford English Dictionary*, the first volume of which was published in 1884. This landmark work, completed in 1928 and revised several times since, traces the changes in meaning of each entry word from its first recorded use to the present.

Jargon and Euphemisms Victorian advances in the natural and social sciences spurred the coinage of new words, such as *telephone*, *photography*, *psychiatrist*, and *feminist*. The new fields of study developed their own specialized and technical vocabulary, or jargon, which began to infiltrate everyday speech. Euphemisms—mild or vague terms substituted for words considered harsh or offensive—also grew more popular as Victorian propriety made certain words taboo. A chicken breast became "white meat"; the legs, "drumsticks." Even words such as *belly* and *stallion* were prudishly avoided.

Slang Although "proper" circles frowned on slang, it was widely used among the lower classes as a means of conversing safely in the presence of outsiders, including the police. The Cockneys of London's East End developed an elaborate system of rhyming slang in early Victorian times—using, for example, *loaf* to mean "head" because *loaf* is the first word in the expression *loaf of bread*, which rhymes with *head*. The expression "use your loaf" is still common in the East End today.



Boy working in a Lancashire cotton mill (c. 1880s)

REFORM AND UNCERTAINTY Though Parliament enacted many important reforms during this period, change came slowly as the middle and upper classes came to realize that the poor were not to blame for their own plight. In 1833, Parliament abolished slavery in the British Empire and passed the first laws restricting child labor. It also ushered in free trade, repealing laws that kept out cheaper foreign grain. Slowly, more reforms followed. Gladstone and the new Liberal Party established public schools and mandated secret ballots for elections. Gladstone's rival, the Tory politician Disraeli, won passage of bills that improved housing and sanitation, legalized trade unions, eased harsh factory conditions, and, in 1867, gave the vote to working-class men.

Even for those who benefited most, though, progress could be painful. Despite their admiration for technology and their faith in human ingenuity, most Victorians were deeply religious, and some of the theories proposed by modern scientists threatened cherished beliefs. In 1830 the geologist Charles Lyell published evidence that the earth was formed not in 4004 B.C., as held by popular interpretations of the Bible, but millions of years earlier. Then, in 1859, Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* introduced his theory that plant and animal species evolved through natural selection—an idea that prompted furious debate because it seemed to contradict the biblical account of creation. “There is not a creed which is not shaken,” wrote poet and critic Matthew Arnold, “not an accredited dogma which is not shown to be questionable, not a received tradition which does not threaten to dissolve.”

A Voice from the Times

Well: what we gain by science is, after all, sadness, as the Preacher saith. The more we know of the laws and nature of the Universe the more ghastly a business we perceive it all to be. . . .

—Thomas Hardy

Cultural Influences

Writers clashed over Britain's expanding imperialism.

British Imperialism

Though Disraeli and Gladstone worked in tandem for domestic reform, they bitterly opposed each other on the issue of British imperialism. Throughout Victoria's rule, the British Empire had been steadily expanding, starting with the annexation of New Zealand in 1840 and the acquisition of Hong Kong two years later. In 1858, after a rebellion in India by native troops called sepoys, Parliament took administrative control of the colony away from the British East India Company and put the colony under the direct administration of the British government.

Gladstone was a “Little Englander”—one who opposed further expansion; Disraeli, in contrast, saw imperialism as the key to Britain's prosperity and patriotic destiny. Victoria sided with Disraeli—in part because his flamboyant charm appealed to her, while she loathed the staid, self-righteous Gladstone—and she allowed him to pursue his ambitions. He bought England a large share in Egypt's newly completed Suez Canal, acquired the Mediterranean island of Cyprus, and annexed the Transvaal, a Dutch settlement in South Africa. Disraeli even persuaded the queen to accept the title “Empress of India.”

Fascinated by the exploits of their explorers, missionaries, and empire builders in Africa and Asia, most British citizens—including certain writers—supported imperialism. **Rudyard Kipling**, for example, wrote short stories and poems glorifying the expansion of the British Empire. Indeed, it was Kipling who conveyed the idea that it was England's “burden,” or duty, to bring civilization to the rest of the world. **William Morris** contradicted him, asking, “What is England's place? To carry civilization through the world? . . . [Civilization] cannot be worth much, when it is necessary to kill a man in order to make him accept it.” As the years passed and colonial conflicts increased, British citizens began to agree with Morris, and support for imperialism waned.

▼ Analyze Visuals

This photograph (c. 1895) depicts an English lord and lady in India. What can you infer about the English couple's relationship with the Indians shown? What impression does the photograph give of English imperialism?



Victorian Literature

Victorian literature shifted gradually from romanticism to realism, with the change led by novelists, who enjoyed a golden age. Late Victorian writing moved into naturalism and escapist fiction.

The Influence of Romanticism

By the 1830s, romanticism was certainly past its height. Shelley, Keats, and Byron were dead, and Wordsworth was no longer a youthful revolutionary but a stuffy, elderly member of the establishment. Still, young up-and-coming poets such as **Robert Browning** and **Alfred, Lord Tennyson** had been raised on the romantics. Of course, they had their likes and dislikes: Tennyson said that Wordsworth at his best was “on the whole the greatest English poet since Milton,” while Browning, who idolized Byron and Shelley, told fellow poet and future wife **Elizabeth Barrett** that he would travel to a distant city just to see a lock of Byron’s hair but “could not get up enthusiasm enough to cross the room if at the other end of it all Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey were condensed into the little china bottle yonder.”

Overall, though, the romantic movement had an enormous influence on early Victorian poets—not so much on their style of writing, which was often brilliantly original, but on their ideas of what poetry should be. On the streets, they saw factories belching smoke and ragged, hungry children begging pennies. In their writing, though, they ignored this grim reality, focusing instead on more “poetic” subjects: ancient legends, exotic foreign lands, romantic love, and the awe-inspiring beauty of nature. **Matthew Arnold** argued that the poet could have no higher goal than “to delight himself with the contemplation of some noble action of a heroic time, and to enable others, through his representation of it, to delight in it also.” Perhaps this approach was pure escapism, perhaps optimism; or perhaps—just as attitudes inherited from an earlier generation hindered social reform—literary ideals inherited from the romantics kept the first Victorian poets from redefining poetry for their own time.

Readers seemed to share this sense of dislocation. On the one hand, the Victorians revered their poets, seeing them as a higher order of human being—sensitive, intuitive, inspired—an image first popularized by the romantics, particularly Byron. On the other hand, many readers, especially among the middle class, increasingly viewed poetry as irrelevant to their

THE ARTISTS’ GALLERY



The Pre-Raphaelites

In 1848, a group of art students at the Royal Academy in London banded together in a secret club, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Tired of being told to imitate the techniques of great Renaissance painters such as Raphael—techniques they saw as stale and insincere—the group sought to return to an earlier time, when artists looked at nature with a fresh eye.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti Though the club itself lasted only a few years, it led to a larger pre-Raphaelite movement, spearheaded by one of the group’s first members, poet and painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti, whose work *La Ghirlandata* (1873) is shown here. Rossetti’s goal was to portray scenes as he imagined them, not as the rules of art dictated. He dreamed of painting like medieval artists—not in the same style, but with the same attitude of honesty, simplicity, and reverence.

Arts and Crafts Movement One of Rossetti’s enthusiastic young followers was the writer, artist, and social reformer **William Morris**. Morris was appalled at the mountains of cheaply made, mass-produced goods churned out by factories to clutter Victorian homes. Urging a return to earlier standards of craftsmanship, he wrote, “We should have nothing in our homes that we do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful.” As the leader of the Arts and Crafts Movement, Morris himself designed wallpaper, pottery, fabrics, glass, and furniture.

own lives. While poet and painter **Dante Gabriel Rossetti** passionately insisted on “art for art’s sake,” the growing reading public turned to other forms of literature, particularly the novel.

Realism in Fiction

Looking at the range and quality of Victorian novelists—the humor, pathos, and unforgettable characters of **Charles Dickens**, the psychological depth of **George Eliot**, the dark passion of **Emily Brontë** and her sister **Charlotte Brontë**—it’s hard to believe that at the time they wrote, fiction was widely considered to be simply light entertainment, not serious literature. To be fair, the vast majority of novels published weren’t great books like *David Copperfield* and *Middlemarch*. The same mass production that filled Victorian homes with inexpensive bric-a-brac of doubtful taste also poured out cheap thrillers and maudlin, weepy tales known as “penny dreadfuls” and “shilling shockers,” which the working classes in particular devoured.

Middle-class readers enjoyed a good cry, too, but they wanted more. They wanted to meet characters like themselves and the people they knew; they wanted to learn more about their rapidly changing world. In other words, they wanted **realism**. Realistic novels tried to capture everyday life as it was really lived. Rather than ignoring science and industry as romanticism did, realism focused on the effects of the Industrial Revolution on Great Britain. Keen-eyed and sharp-witted, realistic writers probed every corner of their society, from the drawing room to the slum, exposing problems and pretensions. Some openly crusaded for reform. Others were more restrained, considering their role to be, as George Eliot put it, “the rousing of the nobler emotions, which make mankind desire the social right, not the prescribing of special measures.”

Romanticism didn’t disappear entirely as soon as realism appeared; many of the best novelists combined elements of both and even borrowed reader-pleasing techniques from popular fiction. For instance, in *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë blended the spooky suspensefulness of the gothic novel with a realistic portrayal of the moral, social, and economic pressures faced by a Victorian woman. Charles Dickens filled his many novels with harshly realistic details drawn from his own experiences and observations, but he sweetened his social criticism with amusingly eccentric characters, engaging storytelling, and, often, sentimental endings. Other writers, such as **Anthony Trollope** and **William Makepeace Thackeray**, were known for a more straightforward realistic approach, faithfully depicting the manners and morals of the upper middle class to which they both belonged. **George Meredith** and George Eliot (the pen name of Mary Ann Evans) pioneered **psychological realism**, which focused less on external realities than on the inner realities of the mind, though still within the context of contemporary social changes.



These “penny dreadfuls” focused on popular subjects—the adventures of boys at school and of highwaymen on the road.

► For Your Outline

ROMANTICISM

- Romantics influenced early Victorian writers.
- Early Victorian poets focused on “poetic” subjects.
- Readers turned to novels.

REALISM

- Fiction was considered light entertainment.
- Realism captured everyday life.
- Realist writers exposed social problems and pretensions.
- Psychological realism focused on internal realities.
- Novels were long and often published serially.

Victorian novels were weighty affairs, quite literally—so weighty that they typically had to be divided into three volumes, collectively known as a three-decker novel. Fortunately, readers had the time and the attention spans to appreciate these elaborately constructed fictional worlds, with their complex storylines and leisurely narrative pace. Families often spent the evening reading aloud to each other, laughing at the adventures of Dickens’s Mr. Pickwick and his oddball friends or sighing over Heathcliff and Catherine’s doomed romance in Emily Brontë’s *Wuthering Heights*.

Many novels were first published in serial form in magazines and newspapers, that is, in monthly installments of several chapters each, meaning that readers might have to wait as long as two years to find out how a novel ended. Dickens was a master of this form. Hordes of fans—not just in England but around the world—rushed to snatch up each new installment of his 1841 novel *The Old Curiosity Shop*, especially as the beloved character Little Nell approached her tragic end. In fact, the suspense was so great that passengers aboard a British ship arriving in New York that year were met by crowds of anxious American readers who had not yet received the latest installment. They were shouting from the dock, “Is Little Nell dead?”

A Voice from the Times

But this I know; the writer who possesses the creative gift owns something of which he is not always master—something that at times strangely wills and works for itself. . . . If the result be attractive, the World will praise you, who little deserve praise; if it be repulsive, the same World will blame you, who almost as little deserve blame.

—Charlotte Brontë

A poster from the 1939 film *Wuthering Heights*



Victorian Viewpoints

Victorians' love of reading was by no means limited to fiction. The same periodicals that provided them with the most recent novel installment by Trollope, Thackeray, or Dickens also offered articles and essays on every imaginable subject, “from Arctic exploration to pinmaking,” as one scholar put it. Victorians were generalists, curious about all aspects of their changing world, and they read for pleasure the sort of nonfiction that today might appeal only to specialists in a particular academic field.

A great deal of this nonfiction was not merely informational but conveyed strong opinions. In carefully worded prose that was at once impassioned and a model of restraint, England's greatest thinkers clashed over the issues of the day. While some, like **Thomas Babington Macaulay**, defended the status quo, most found much to criticize in Victorian society—though few went as far as **Thomas Carlyle**, who in his book *Past and Present* predicted bloody revolution as the inevitable result of the social breakdown caused by unregulated, profit-driven industry.

Whatever their viewpoint, these critics' authoritative tone must have been reassuring to a readership no longer sure what to think about anything. Could science and religious belief coexist, or would one destroy the other? Did British imperialism benefit both conqueror and conquered, or was it a disastrous mistake? Would the Industrial Revolution prove to be the dawning of a great new age or the end of civilization? Increasingly, the optimism of the early years of the era turned to uneasiness in the face of what **Tennyson** called “the thoughts that shake mankind.”

This uneasiness permeated the literature written during the last years of Victoria's reign. Poets no longer contemplated life at a romantic distance

► For Your Outline

VICTORIAN VIEWPOINTS

- Periodicals offered nonfiction articles on all manner of subjects.
- England's thinkers clashed over issues of the day.
- Uncertainty permeated literature of the late Victorian period.
- Naturalist writers saw the universe as an uncaring force, indifferent to human suffering.
- Readers turned to escapist fare.

(Left) An 1889 edition of *Puck*, a popular periodical; (right) an 1866 caricature of poet Matthew Arnold titled “Sweetness and Light”





The Victorian period saw a boom in children's literature, including Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, illustrated in 1911 by N. C. Wyeth.

but instead expressed their sense of loss and pain at living in a world in which order had been replaced by chaos and confusion. In his poem "Dover Beach," **Matthew Arnold** describes a bright "sea of faith" retreating to the edges of the earth, leaving humanity stranded in darkness. Pessimistic themes also permeated the poetry and fiction of **Thomas Hardy**, who wrote in a new style called **naturalism**. An offshoot of realism, naturalism saw the universe as an uncaring force, indifferent to human suffering. Naturalist writers packed their novels with the harsh details of industrialized life, unrelieved by humor or a happy ending.

Not surprisingly, late Victorian readers began to avoid serious literature, finding it depressingly bleak. Instead, they turned to the adventure tales of **Rudyard Kipling**, who set his tales in India; the witty drawing-room comedies of **Oscar Wilde**; the science fiction of **H. G. Wells**; or the detective stories of **Arthur Conan Doyle**, whose Sherlock Holmes was England's first fictional detective. Along with children's literature that included **Lewis Carroll's** *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and **Robert Louis Stevenson's** *Treasure Island*, such wonderfully written escapist fare rounded out the great diversity of Victorian literary voices.

In the end, the pessimism of Hardy and Arnold came the closest to anticipating what lay just around the bend: the catastrophe of World War I. In the next century, modernist writers would pick up the torch from their Victorian predecessors and grapple with issues the Victorians could not have imagined.

A Voice from the Times

Pessimism is, in brief, playing the sure game. You cannot lose at it; you may gain. It is the only view of life in which you can never be disappointed. Having reckoned what to do in the worst possible circumstances, when better arise, as they may, life becomes child's play.

—Thomas Hardy

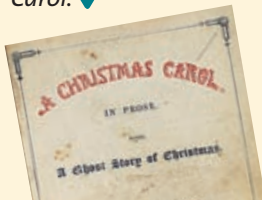
Connecting Literature, History, and Culture

Use this timeline and the questions on the next page to gain insight into developments during this period, both in Britain and in the world as a whole.

BRITISH LITERARY MILESTONES

1830

- 1833** Alfred, Lord Tennyson, begins writing his long poem *In Memoriam*.
- 1843** Charles Dickens publishes his short novel *A Christmas Carol*. ▼



1845

- 1846** Poets Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett elope and move to Italy.
- 1847** Charlotte Brontë publishes *Jane Eyre*; sister Emily publishes *Wuthering Heights*.
- 1850** Elizabeth Barrett Browning publishes love poems *Sonnets from the Portuguese*.

1860

- 1860** Dickens publishes first magazine installment of *Great Expectations*.
- 1861** George Eliot (pen name of Mary Ann Evans) publishes *Silas Marner*.
- 1865** Gerard Manley Hopkins enters Jesuit religious order and stops writing poetry.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

1830

- 1833** Factory Act bans factory work for children under nine; slavery is abolished in British Empire.
- 1837** William IV dies and is succeeded by 18-year-old niece Victoria, ushering in Britain's age of greatest prosperity.
- 1842** The Opium War with China is settled, with Britain claiming Hong Kong.

1845

- 1845** The Irish potato famine begins, eventually killing more than a million people (to 1851).
- 1854** The Crimean War—in which Britain, Turkey, France, and Austria fight Russia—begins.
- 1859** Charles Darwin publishes *On the Origin of Species*.

1860

- 1861** Prince Albert dies. ►
- 1867** Reform Bill doubles the number of voters by including working-class men.
- 1870** Local governments establish public schools; the Married Women's Act gives women economic rights.



WORLD CULTURE AND EVENTS

1830

- 1839** American Charles Goodyear invents process for making rubber strong and elastic.
- 1844** Samuel F. B. Morse sends the first long-distance telegraph message. ▼



1845

- 1848** Ethnic uprisings erupt throughout Europe; Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels publish *Communist Manifesto*.
- 1851** Widespread hunger and corruption lead to China's Taiping Rebellion (to 1864).
- 1853** U.S. Commodore Matthew Perry sails four ships into Tokyo harbor, ending Japan's self-imposed isolation.

1860

- 1861** Civil War erupts in the United States (to 1865); Alexander II frees serfs in Russia.
- 1869** The Suez Canal opens. ▼
- 1874** Alexander Graham Bell develops the telephone.



MAKING CONNECTIONS

- Which invention of the time do you think most changed people’s lives?
- What events show Britain’s commitment to imperialism?
- What evidence do you see of social progress and reform in Great Britain and elsewhere?
- What contributions did women make to British literature of the period?



RI 7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different formats as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

1875	1890	1900
<p>1875 Hopkins resumes writing.</p> <p>1883 Robert Louis Stevenson publishes adventure novel <i>Treasure Island</i>.</p> <p>1887 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle publishes <i>A Study in Scarlet</i>, introducing detective Sherlock Holmes. ▲</p> 	<p>1891 Thomas Hardy publishes <i>Tess of the D'Urbervilles</i>; Oscar Wilde's novel <i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i> shocks Victorian England with its theme of the corruption of wealth.</p> <p>1895 H. G. Wells publishes the landmark science fiction novel <i>The Time Machine</i>.</p> <p>1896 Reaction to Thomas Hardy's novel <i>Jude the Obscure</i> is so negative that thereafter he writes only poetry.</p>	<p>1900 <i>Oxford Book of English Verse</i> is first published.</p> <p>1901 Rudyard Kipling publishes his novel <i>Kim</i>, detailing life in India.</p>
1875	1890	1900
<p>1876 Disraeli secures the title “Empress of India” for Victoria; collective bargaining by trade unions is legalized.</p> <p>1879 Ireland presses for home rule.</p> <p>1884 Reform Bill gives vote to almost all adult males.</p>	<p>1897 British-Sudanese War begins.</p> <p>1899 The Boer War against Dutch South African settlers begins (to 1902). ▼</p> 	<p>1900 Nigeria becomes a British protectorate.</p> <p>1901 Britain establishes the Commonwealth of Australia; Queen Victoria dies after nearly 64 years of rule.</p>
1875	1890	1900
<p>1876 Korea becomes an independent nation.</p> <p>1879 Thomas Edison invents the first light bulb. ►</p> <p>1884 The Berlin Conference of 14 European nations sets rules for dividing Africa into colonies.</p> 	<p>1893 Henry Ford develops gasoline-powered automobile; New Zealand becomes the first country to grant women suffrage.</p> <p>1895 Italian Guglielmo Marconi invents the first radio.</p> <p>1896 The first modern Olympic Games are held in Athens, Greece.</p>	<p>1900 Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud publishes <i>The Interpretation of Dreams</i>; in China, the Boxer Rebellion against foreign influence breaks out.</p> <p>1901 Theodore Roosevelt becomes president of the United States after William McKinley is assassinated.</p>

The Legacy of the Era

Remnants of an Empire

The British Empire was the most extensive empire in world history. At the height of its power, it held sway over a quarter of the earth's people and land. Though it has since crumbled, the empire's influence remains strong. All over the world, British-style legal and governmental systems, economic practices, sports, and fashions—even the English language itself—are evidence of England's far-flung reach.

RESEARCH Choose one country in the Commonwealth of Nations (an association of 54 former British territories) and find out what aspects of British culture remain in that country today. Report your findings to the class, using visual aids to enhance your presentation.

COMMON CORE

W1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts.

W7 Conduct short research projects. **SL5** Make strategic use of digital media in presentations.

The former British colony of Hong Kong continued its common law system after reverting to Chinese rule in 1997. Shown here are Supreme Court judges in 2002.



Made by Hand

Mass production is even more the norm today than it was in Victorian times. Despite the profusion of factory-produced goods, however, many people have come to appreciate handmade items, from quilts to furniture to cookies. These modern consumers value the same qualities once touted by William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement: fine craftsmanship that combines usefulness and aesthetic appeal with the personal touch.

DISCUSS Bring in something handmade by you or someone else and share it with the class. How is it different from a similar mass-produced item? Discuss the value of handmade items versus the value of inexpensive and accessible goods.

Truly Dickensian

The next time you hear someone referred to as a Scrooge, or a bleak situation described as Dickensian, you will know who to thank—Dickens himself. The influence of Dickens is widespread in today's world. There are Dickens societies and Dickens book clubs, Dickens museums and Dickens festivals, Dickens satires and even a Dickens theme park! In addition, there have been countless stage, film, and television versions of Dickens's works, including *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, and *A Christmas Carol* (even Disney gave us Scrooge McDuck).

CREATE As a class, create a multimedia Dickens center to showcase Dickens's legacy. Include a variety of texts, visuals, film clips, and memorabilia related to Dickens in today's world.



Glass blower at work



A scene from the 2005 film *Oliver Twist*, directed by Roman Polanski