Hyde Park Speakers’ Corner Project

**Background Information**

Since 1872, the northeast corner of Hyde Park in London, Speakers’ Corner, has given the people of England a place to express their views and assemble to hear others’ opinions. Every Sunday, individuals set up a soapbox (or stepladder these days) to speak about the political issues of the day, and the police did not bother them as long as they were not obscene or blasphemous. Crowds, often numbering in the thousands, came mostly to be entertained. The main performers at these gatherings were the hecklers, who hugely enjoyed bombarding the speakers with questions or somewhat rude comments about the speaker’s ability to make an argument on the political topic.

**Directions:**

You will be assigned the role of a speaker and will write a brief “soapbox speech” in Hyde Park. Each speaker has a particular response to industrialization. You will use the primary sources provided, your reading/lecture notes and some research to help you write your speech.

**Roles:** *(only 2-3 students per role max)*

* Karl Marx
* Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Thomas Malthus
* Robert Owen
* Jeremy Bentham, John Stuart Mills
* a Luddite
* Michael Sadler (a labour reformer)
* a Chartist
* Maud Arncliffe Sennett (a suffragist)
* Charles Knight
* Samuel Courtauld (a factory owner)

**30 pts** Soapbox Speech

 25 pts – written speech

 5 pts – presentation of speech

**10 pts** Participation during speech presentation*(appropriate heckling during the speech presentations)*

**Your speech will be graded on the following:**

1. **Introduction – provide sufficient background information on your historical figure**
2. **Present problem/opportunity that industrialization creates** *(based on your historical figure’s perspective)*
3. **Identify and explain a person to blame/take credit for this problem/opportunity**
4. **Propose a solution/action to address problem/opportunity** *(based on your historical figure’s perspective)*
5. **Rebut an opposing argument**
6. **Conclusion**
7. **Historical Accuracy**
8. **Creativity – adding your own voice but staying in character of your historical figure**

**Soap Box Speech Outline and Sample**

1. **Introduce yourself, your occupation and who you believe you speak for**

***Example:*** *“My name is John Smith, I used to be a farmer in a small village but am now a worker in a textile mill in Manchester and I represent the voice of the poor factory workers.”*

1. **Frame the problem and/or opportunity that you believe industrialization is creating**

***Example:*** *“This Industrial Revolution has driven my family from the common land in my village and has forced me to work as a slave to a machine in the this overcrowded, polluted city. Instead of the healthy countryside my children live in a slum, breathe the noxious coal smoke and are forced to work in the dark “Satanic mills” in order to help our family survive.”*

1. **Identify who you think is to blame/credit for this problem/opportunity and why**

***Example:*** *“I blame the factory owners for my plight. It is their greed that makes me live on starvation wages in a dirty city where I have no say in how my government is run. They value the so-called free market and their profits over the health of their workers.”*

1. **Propose a solution or action that addresses this problem /opportunity and explain why this is a good idea**

***Example:*** *“What can improve the horrible living condition of workers and their families? The right to vote! The franchise must be expanded to include ALL men not just the property owning few. With the right to vote workers in England will be able to have a say in their working conditions and send voices to Parliament that represent our interests. Members of Parliament who will pass industrial reforms like the 12 hour work day and provide public education for our children.*

1. **Rebut an opposing argument**

***Example:*** *“Some people might argue that workers should be grateful for the opportunity to work and that if government begins to regulate factories it will make English industry less competitive but they are wrong. Happy workers and citizens are more productive workers. We workers are not fools, we will not regulate ourselves out of jobs. Our goal is to vote for politicians who will represent the interests of BOTH the workers and the factory owning bourgeoisie.*

1. **Conclusion**

**Complete this sentence:** *“If we continue/do not continue along this path, I predict…”*

***Example:*** *“If we continue along this path of worker disenfranchisement, I predict that workers like myself will demand more than the right to vote, they will seek to overthrow the capitalist system, as the Communists propose and England will experience more that an industrial revolution. It will experience a political and social revolution that will make the Haitian Revolution look like a pillow fight.”*

**Response to Industrialization Notes**

*Use this guide to take notes with the lecture.*

**Jeremy Bentham & John Stuart Mills**

 

What were their beliefs?

Their philosophy?

**Robert Owen**

Who was Robert Owen?

Owen’s philosophy?



What were his beliefs?

**Luddite**

What were they a response to?

Who were the Luddites?

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| **Source:** Drawing, coverage of the Luddite rebellion, early 19th century British newspaper, England.http://www.cottontimes.co.uk/cottonpix/luddites.jpg |

**Chartism**

Who were the Chartist? What did they want?

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| **Source**: Except from the Chartist petition to the British Parliament, 1983Image result for chartistMay it please your honorable house, to take our petition into your most serious consideration and… to have a law passed, granting to every male of lawful age… the right of voting for members of parliament, and… elections of members of parliaments to be by secret ballot…. |

**Cult of Domesticity**

What does Cult of Domesticity mean?

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Who followed these social behaviors?

Examples of new code of social behavior?

What was this movement about? What did they want?

**Suffrage Movement**

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What were some restrictions that women faced at the time?

**Maud Arncliffe Sennett**

What is she saying in this document?

Who was Maud Arncliffe Sennett?

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| **Source:** “Why I want to Vote,” by Maud Arncliffe Sennett, suffragist, excepted from *The Vote*, a journal published by the Women’s Freedom League, 1910Image result for Maud Arncliffe Sennett,… I want it because I do not see why the women I employ – skilled workers, the chief of sole supporters of their humble homes – should not, the same as men, protect their labour and their other interests at the polls. I want the vote because I pay to educate the children of my older workmen, yet they, who pay no rates or taxes, are marching to the ballot-box, and the Government, which impudently robs me of my hard-earned money, would send me to prison as a third class criminal were I to walk to St. Stephen’s and importune for a hearing to redress my grievances…  |

**Charles Knight**

How does Knight feel about industrialization?

Who was Charles Knight?

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| **Source:** Excerpt from *The Working Man’s Companion* subtitled *The Results of Machinery, Production and Increased Employment,* published in 1820 Charlesknight1860s.JPGYou are surrounded, as we have constantly shown you throughout this book, which an infinite number of comforts and conveniences which had no existence two or three centuries ago and those comforts are not used only by a few, but are within the reach of almost all men. Every day is adding something to your comforts. Your houses are better built, your clothes are cheaper, you have an infinite number of domestic utensils. You can travel cheaply from place to place, and not only travel at less expense, but travel ten times quicker than two hundred years ago.  |

**Michael Sadler**

What do we learn from this interview conducted by Sadler?

Who was Michael Sadler?

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| **Source:** Abraham Whitehead, factory owner, interviewed by British parliament member Michael Sadler, 1832.Michael Sadler**Question:** What moral effect do you think it has on the minds of the children who labor at this early period of life?**Answer:** I have seen a little boy, only this winter, who works in the mill, and who lives within two to three hundred yards of my own door; he is not six years old, and I have seen him, when he had a few coppers in his pocket, go to a beer shop, call for a glass of ale, and drink as boldly as any full-grown man, cursing and swearing.**Question:** Can children employed in this way obtain any instructions from day schools?**Answer:** There is no possibility of that; but since this Factory Bill has been introduced, when I have been at mills the children have gathered round me for a minute or two as I have passed along, and have said: “When shall we have to work ten hours a day? Will you get the Ten Hours Bill? We shall have a rare time then; surely someone will set up night school, I will learn to write, that I will.” |

**Samuel Courtauld (factory owner)**

Who was Samuel Courtauld?

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| **Source:** Samuel Courtauld, factory owner, speech on proposed factory legislation, 1833.Image result for samuel courtauld industrialistThe real hardship of the laboring poor here (silk mills in Essex) is rather the want of adequate employment than its severity; and the really painful task of a master manufacturer is the daily necessity of refusing employment to numbers of famishing applicants.Legislative interference in the arrangement and conduct of business is always injurious, tending to check improvement and to increase the cost of production.] |

What does Courtauld say is the real source of suffering for the poor working? class?

How does Courtauld see factory owners/manfacturers?

What are Courtauld’s opinion on government regulations and labor laws?