

While thousands of children worked down the mine, thousands of others worked in the cotton mills. The mill owners often took in orphans to their workhouses; they lived at the mill and were worked as hard as possible.

Cotton mills were dangerous places to work. Mills were also hot, humid, dusty and extremely noisy. With little ventilation, cotton dust caused eye infections, breathing problems and stomach complaints. Workers spent long hours tending fast moving machinery which resulted in many serious accidents.

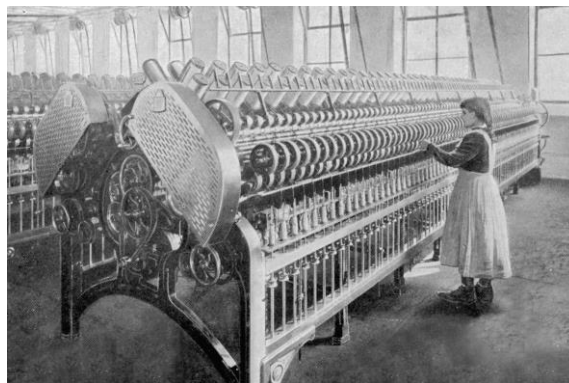
Children were especially at risk. Children as young as seven years old could be found working fourteen hours a day in the mills.

Being small and nimble, they were given dangerous jobs such as climbing underneath moving machinery to remove any cotton pieces that had fallen below - this role was called being a 'scavenger'. They spent most of their time at the machines with little time for fresh air or exercise.

Even part of Sunday was spent at the mill cleaning machines. There were some serious accidents where children lost their hair when it was caught in the machine, hands could be crushed and some children were killed when they went to sleep and fell into the machine.

The industrial revolution saw hundreds of large, steam-powered cotton mills spring up across the country. Raw cotton was shipped in from the United States where it was woven into cotton cloth. The finished cloth was then exported to markets across the globe.

Many local mills closed after the First World War as cheap imports began to destroy local textile production.



Retrieval:

- What caused eye infections, breathing problems and stomach complaints?
- Where was the 'raw cotton' from and how did it get to the UK?

Vocabulary:

- Which word appears in both the text above and the nursery rhyme illustrated?



Jack be _____,
Jack be quick,
Jack jumped over the candlestick.

What does the word mean? Re-write the nursery rhyme- replacing the word with another synonym.

Inference:

- Why during the Industrial Revolution, do you think so many people worked in coal mines as well as factories and mills?

nimble



Fast or energetic.

Someone who is nimble can move their fingers, hands, or legs quickly and easily.

