

Building academic language

Lernziele / Angestrebte Kompetenzen

- Raise language awareness
- Draw attention to the differences between communicative language and academic language
- Introduce students to the different characteristics of academic language
- Develop reading comprehension skills and productive skills (in academic language)
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Wichtige Etappen im Unterrichtsablauf

1. Decide on a thinking skill (prediction, speculation, cause&effect thinking...) and choose a context/subject (e.g. environmental problems, historical periods/contexts, hobbies, vacation planning, media, ...).
2. Determine necessary language to "communicate" this skill (vocabulary, grammar point, useful expressions, ...)
3. Check previous knowledge (of grammatical structures and lexical fields).
4. Revise and introduce language.
→ *different possibilities: vocabulary lists, lists with linking words, gap-fill exercises, syntax exercises, ...*
5. Students use language in a meaningful task (*describe a graph or a photo, write a report, give advice, ...*).
6. Look at the productions & give feedback
→ *different possibilities: error corrections (done by the teacher, by peers, or using track changes in work, ...), model answers and discussions*
7. Students edit their work in order to improve

Methodische Hinweise/Voraussetzungen

It is very important that students are exposed to model answers and see how language is used in practice. Students should do some exercises/activities to practice language and improve their writing skills. Ideally, language teachers cooperate with "specialist" teachers (history teachers, social studies teachers etc.) who provide the necessary content and methodological knowledge to assist the language teacher in approaching the topic. This will prevent the lessons from remaining superficial.

Didaktische Hilfsmittel	Texts / handouts / working sheets
Zeitaufwand	2-6 lessons
Bibliographic reference	Zwiers Jeff : <i>Building academic language : Essential practices for Content Classrooms</i> (San Francisco : Jossey-Bass, 2008)

Some concrete examples from Laura Baldelli's TC

English/3^e – Context : industrial revolution

Title	Low life expectancy in 19th-century towns
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learn why the life expectancy in 19th-century cities was low • practise cause and effect thinking • revise old and learn new cause and effect language • (develop academic language)
Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. students analyse different visuals and answer question (Why was the life expectancy so low in 19th-c. towns?) 2. correction with graphic organiser and prompts 3. revision of old and introduction of new cause and effect language with gap-fill exercise 4. Students edit their text or write one. 5. correction feedback
Methodology	It's important that students are exposed to model answers and see how new language is used in practice.
Materials	Handouts
Duration	2 lessons

Title	The working conditions in 19th-century factories
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learn about working conditions in 19th-century factories • learn how to report texts and cite examples • (develop academic language)

Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. read and understand texts 2. talk about intended audience and purpose of text 3. introduce useful language 4. students write a report based on text and using new expressions 5. read model answer and focus on expressions
Methodology	It's important that students are exposed to model answers.
Materials	texts, handouts
Duration	2-3 lessons

Title	Workers' rights
Learning Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out about some of our rights at work we now consider normal • Revise modal verbs
Steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. read through authentic extract from employees' rights today (British government website) 2. Check comprehension with gap-fill exercise into which students have to fill in the appropriate modal verb form
Materials	Handouts
Duration	Part of a lesson – just an activity

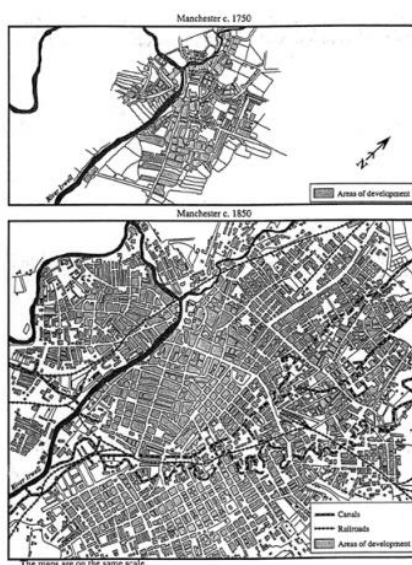
Lesson handouts (Laura Baldelli)

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS: LOW LIFE EXPECTANCY

With the help of the following documents, **explain why the life expectancy of people living in nineteenth-century towns was so low**. Write a short paragraph or create a graphic organiser.

Average Age at Death			
	Gentry (<i>Adel</i>) / Professionals	Farmers / Traders	Workers / Artisans (<i>Handwerker</i>)
Rural (<i>ländlich</i>) districts (average)	54	39	32
Industrial districts (Manchester)	38	20	17

Document 1: adapted from *The Lancet (Medical Journal)*, 1843



Document 2: Manchester c. 1750 and c. 1850. Both maps published in the 1850s.

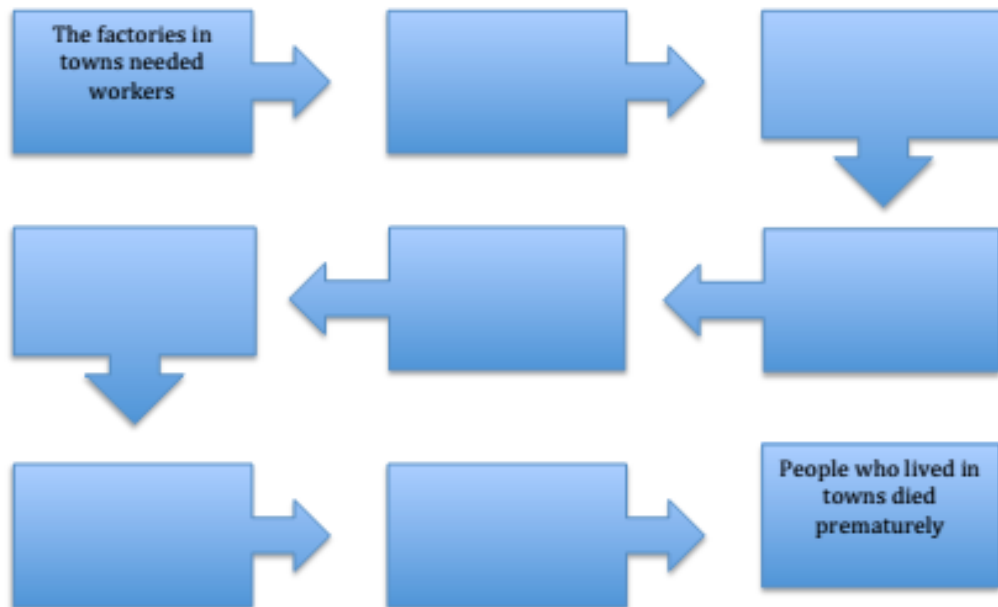


Document 3: Gustave Dore, *Over the city by railway, London, 1872*

The street was unpaved. A gutter (*Gosse*) ran down the middle, with pools every now and then. Women from their doors tossed household slops (*Abwässer*) into the gutter. The slops ran into the pools, and lay there, stagnating (*stauen*). Passers-by had to step on the heaps of ashes to keep their feet clean.

Document 4: adapted from the novel *Mary Barton*, written by Elizabeth Gaskell in 1848.

ONE CAUSE FOR THE LOW LIFE EXPECTANCY IN TOWNS



Put these links into the cause and effect chain.

- The population increased
- Unsanitary (*unhygienisch*) houses
- Diseases spread
- More houses were necessary
- Unhealthy living conditions
- More houses were built, but cheaply and quickly
- Many people moved to the city to get a job

Other causes:

CAUSE AND EFFECT LANGUAGE

Revision

Linking Words	Adverbs
As a result, This is why, For this reason, therefore	Unsurprisingly, Indeed, (<i>In der Tat</i>)

Complete the gaps with a word from the box. Sometimes more than one word is possible.

consequence	repercussion	effect
cause (of)	reason (why/for)	origin (of)
to lead (led led)	to result in	to bring about
to require		

1. The short life span of workers in the 19th century had various _____.
2. Unhealthy living conditions were one of the _____ for the low life expectancy in towns.
3. The rapid increase in population _____ a demand for new housing.
4. The population increase _____ the building of new houses.
5. One _____ of the slapdash manner in which houses were built was the multiplication of diseases.
6. The unhealthy living conditions _____ the spread of diseases.

Linking sentences

1. Read this extract from a history textbook. Which cause and effect expressions are already in place?
2. Follow the instructions on the right to construct longer and more complex sentences.

<p>With the spread of the industry, the size of Britain's towns and cities increased. London and the great ports continued to grow. Some mill towns appeared from nothing. In 1800, two-thirds of the population still lived in the countryside. By 1850, the figure was down to a half. By the 1890s, three-quarters of Britain's people lived in towns.</p>	<p>Make one sentence out of sentences 2 and 3. Make one sentence out of the last three in this paragraph.</p>
<p>The first reason for this change was that men and women moved from rural areas into the towns. They hoped to get work in the factories and mills. The wages were low, but they were better than what labourers could get on the farms. The second reason was that families were large. Indeed, it was an advantage to have many children if five and six-year-olds could earn money in the mills.</p>	<p>Make one sentence out of sentences 1 and 2. Rewrite sentence 3 using 'although'.</p>
<p>Workers' houses were built quickly and cheaply. Many of them were two or three-roomed 'back-to-backs'. They stood in rows in narrow streets or clustered round gloomy courtyards. Many families shared a single room. The majority of streets were not paved, and the only sewer was an open drain. Water was piped from the river to a pump in the street or yard.</p>	<p>Make one sentence out of sentences 1 and 2 using a relative clause.</p>
<p>Unsurprisingly, bad housing and impure water led to diseases such as cholera and typhoid fever. Generally, people died much younger in the towns than in the countryside.</p>	

WORKING CONDITIONS 1

Some of these lords of the loom have in their employ thousands of miserable creatures. In the cotton-spinning work these creatures are kept, fourteen hours in each day, locked up, summer and winter, in a heat from EIGHTY TO EIGHTY-FOUR DEGREES ...

a loom: ein Webstuhl
to spin cotton:
Baumwolle spinnen

Now, then, do you duly consider what a heat of eighty-two is? Very seldom do we feel such a heat as this in England. The 31st of last August, and the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of last September, were very hot days. The newspapers told us that men had dropped down dead in the harvests fields and that many horses had fallen dead upon the road; and yet the heat during those days never exceeded eighty-four degrees in the hottest part of the day. We were retreating to the coolest rooms in our houses; we were pulling off our coats, wiping the sweat off our faces, puffing, blowing and panting; and yet we were living in a heat nothing like eighty degrees. What, then, must be the situation of the poor creatures who are doomed to toil, day after day, for three hundred and thirteen days in the year, fourteen hours in each day, in an average heat of eighty-two degrees? Can any man, with a heart in his body, and a tongue in his head, refrain from cursing a system that produces such slavery and such cruelty?

82°F = 26°C

to toil: to work

to refrain from: to stop
yourself from doing sth

Observe, too, that these poor creatures have no cool room to retreat to, not a moment to wipe off their sweat, and not a breath of air to come and interpose itself between them and infection. The door of the place wherein they work, is *locked*, except *half an hour*, at tea-time; the workpeople are not allowed to send for water to drink, in the hot factory; even the *rain-water* is *locked* up, by the master's order, otherwise they would be happy to drink even that. If any spinner be found with this *window open*, he is to pay a fine of a shilling! Mr. Martin of Galway has procured Acts of Parliament to be passed to prevent *cruelty to animals*. If horses or dogs were shut up in a place like this they would certainly be thought worthy of Mr. Martin's attention.

Not only is there not a breath of sweet air in these truly infernal scenes; but, for a large part of the time, there is the abominable and pernicious stink of the GAS to assist in the murderous effects of the heat. In addition to the heat and the gas; in addition to the noxious effluvia of the gas, mixed with the steam, there are the dust, and what is called the *cotton-flyings* or fuzz, which the unfortunate creatures have to inhale; and the fact is, the notorious fact is, that well-constituted men are rendered old and past labour at forty years of age, and that children are rendered decrepit and deformed, and thousands upon thousands of them slaughtered by consumptions, before they arrive at the age of sixteen. And are these establishments to boast of? If we were to admit the fact that they compose an addition to the population of the country; if we were to further admit that they caused an addition to the pecuniary resources of the Government, ought not a government to be ashamed to derive

effluvia (pl):
AUSDÜNSTUNG

labour: work
decrepit: very old and
not in good health
consumption:
tuberculosis

pecuniary: connected
with money
means: ways, methods

resources from such means?



William Cobbett (1763-1835, political journalist), *Political Register*, 1824

Political Register was Cobbett's own weekly newspaper.

Analysis

1. Who is the intended audience (i.e. who was this text written for)?
2. What is the purpose of this text?
3. What are the text's strategies? Look at examples of textual strategies in the table below and see if you can find them in the text.

Textual strategies are the means by which an author tries to convince his audience of the importance of his message.	
Example	Using statistics or illustrative stories, either true or fictitious, to make your point or to clarify something
Repetition	Repeating a word or expression and maybe adding more detail in order to emphasise something so that the audience realises its importance in the discussion
Rhetorical question	A question where no answer is given because the answer is obvious or obviously desired. Used for emphasis, provocation or drawing a conclusion.
Allusion	a short informal reference to a famous person or event (helps to explain, clarify or enhance a subject)
Hyperbole (Exaggeration)	Deliberately exaggerating something for emphasis or effect
Emotive language	Using words with positive or negative connotations in order to trigger emotions in the audience

(adapted from www.virtualsalt.com and www.englishbiz.co.uk)



Cotton Mill, Columbia S.C., 1908



Rock Mill, Ashton under Lyne, built in 1893
(In Ashton under Lyne, near Manchester, 75 cotton mills were established between 1773 and 1905)

WORKING CONDITIONS 2

Lowell, April [1844].

Dear Mary: In my last I told you I would write again, and say more of my life here; and this I will now attempt to do.

I went into the mill to work a few days after I wrote to you. It looked very pleasant at first, the rooms were so light, spacious, and clean, the girls so pretty and neatly dressed, and the machines so brightly polished or nicely painted. The plants in the windows, or on the overseer's bench or desk, gave a pleasant aspect to things. You will wish to know what work I am doing. I will tell you of the different kinds of work.

There is, first, the carding-room, where the cotton flies most, and the girls get the dirtiest. But this is easy, and the females are allowed time to go out at night before the bell rings – on Saturday night at least, if not on all other nights. Then there is the spinning room, which is very neat and pretty. In this room are the spinners and doffers. The spinners watch the frames; keep them clean, and the threads mended if they break. The doffers take off the full bobbins, and put on the empty ones. ... [Weavers] have the hardest time of all – or can have, if they choose to take charge of three or four looms, instead of the one pair which is the allotment. ...

I could have had work in the dressing-room, but chose to be a weaver; and I will tell you why. I disliked the closer air of the dressing-room, though I might have become accustomed to that. I could not learn to dress as quickly as I could to weave, nor have work on my own so soon, and should have had to stay with Mrs. C. two or three weeks before I could go in at all, and I did not like to be “lying on my oars” (*to rest, to relax*) so long. And, more than this, when I get well learned I can have extra work, and make double wages, which you know is quite an inducement with some.

[When] I went to the mill ... [at] first the hours seemed very long, but I was so interested in learning that I endured it very well; and when I went out at night the sound of the mill was in my ears, as of crickets, frogs, and jewsharps, all mingled together in strange discord. After that it seemed as though cotton-wool was in my ears, but now I do not mind at all. You know that people learn to sleep with the thunder of Niagara in their ears and a cotton mill is no worse, though you wonder that we do not have to hold our breath in such a noise.

It makes my feet ache and swell to stand so much ... The girls generally wear old shoes about their work ... but they almost all say that when they have worked there a year or two they have to procure shoes a size or two larger than before they came. The right hand, which is the one used in stopping and starting the loom becomes larger than the left; but in other respects the factory is not detrimental to a young girl's appearance. ...

You wish to know ... of our hours of labor. We go in at five o'clock; at seven we come out to breakfast; at half-past seven we return to our work, and stay until half-past twelve. At one, or quarter-past one four months in the year, we return to our work, and stay until seven at night. Then the evening is all our own, which is more than some laboring girls can say, who think nothing is more tedious.

Harriet Farley, 'Letters from Susan', *Lowell Offering* (1844)

Comprehension

1. On your own, read the text and select five words that hinder your understanding.
2. Look them up in a dictionary.
3. Read the text again and find information about
 - the working conditions and the effects they had on the workers;
 - positive aspects or descriptions of the job;
 - negative aspects or descriptions of the job.
4. Discuss your findings in English in small groups. Be able to present them to the rest of the class.

Analysis

1. Read a brief biography of the author.
2. In groups, discuss these questions in English:
 - Why do you think she chose to publish this fictional letter in a magazine?
 - Do you think the descriptions are honest and accurate? Justify.



Struggling to support a large, sickly family, Reverend Stephen and Lucy Farley relied on their older children to find work to keep the family afloat (*über Wasser*). Harriet Farley, the sixth of ten children, worked as a young woman in various menial jobs¹ and taught school. Though teaching was the respected profession for a young woman who needed to earn an income, she rejected a career as a school mistress and traveled instead to Lowell, Massachusetts, to work in the newly built textile mills.

Many of the mill workers were like Harriet – rural young women eager (*begierig*) for social mobility² – so they organized and attended "Improvement Circles" for intellectual and social growth. In 1841 one of these groups began to publish a monthly periodical, the *Lowell Offering*, for which Harriet Farley soon took responsibility as editor, publisher, and proprietor. Read widely both in the U.S. and abroad, the paper satisfied readers' curiosity about these young women who left home to work thirteen-hour factory shifts. As many workers began to demand better hours, wages, and conditions from factory owners, the popularity of both the *Offering* and of Harriet Farley herself declined (*decreased*), for she claimed that factory life was "emancipating" and defended management policies.

adapted from <http://www.librarycompany.org/women/portraits/farley.htm>

¹ menial jobs are unimportant and badly-paid jobs which don't require much education

² moving up in society, i.e. getting a better social position

WORKING CONDITIONS

Bringing the two texts together

Complete the following table in note form with information from the two texts.

	Cobbett	Farley
Working hours		
Working conditions		
Effects of working conditions		

Language: Reporting texts and citing examples

Reporting verbs

say, state, add, observe, suggest, claim (*behaupten*), complain

Other useful verbs

describe, illustrate, highlight (*hervorheben*, *unterstreichen*), draw attention to (the fact that) (*auf etwas aufmerksam machen*)

appear, seem, imply (*andeuten*), emerge (*herauskommen*, *sich herausstellen*)

Useful expressions

As can be seen in X's description of ...

X proves / shows that ...

Linking words

According to X,

for example, for instance

such as

In fact,

Indeed,

Apparently,

The underlined words leave room for uncertainty. Either they report other people's statements without providing proof, or they introduce an interpretation.

Writing

With reference to Cobbett's and Farley's texts, describe the working conditions in cotton mills in the nineteenth century. Make use of the expressions provided. (ca. 150 words)

Model Answer

With reference to Cobbett's and Farley's texts, describe the working conditions in cotton mills in the nineteenth century. Make use of the expressions provided.

Both Cobbett and Farley's texts highlight how hard the working conditions were in the nineteenth-century cotton mills. A typical workday was fourteen hours long with up to an hour for lunch. According to Farley, the workers started at five in the morning and finished at seven in the evening, but this depended on the kind of work they were doing. Girls in the carding room, for instance, appeared to have had more evenings off.

Generally, the conditions in which they worked were tough. Cobbett's main complaint was the constant temperature of 26°C, a heat in which they had to work without fresh air or a drink of water. In fact, Cobbett claims that the workers were fined if they so much as opened the window or drank the rainwater.

Harley, on the other hand, doesn't talk about the heat, but she mentions the noise, which seemed to temporarily deafen her, because she states that it was as if there was cotton wool in her ears

Other effects of the working conditions on the body were more long term. Susan says that the size of the factory girls' feet increased from standing so much and that their working hand got bigger as well. Cobbett draws attention to more harmful consequences. Due to the cotton flyings, which the workers inhaled, they suffered from serious lung conditions very early on, and the children even grew up with malformations.

(234 words)

Workers' rights

Trade Unions and Workers' rights

What is a trade union?

A trade union is an organisation with members who are usually workers or employees. It looks after their interests at work by doing things like:

- negotiating agreements with employers on pay and conditions
- discussing big changes like large scale redundancy²¹⁷
- discussing members' concerns with employers
- going with members to disciplinary and grievance meetings

You have the right to:

- choose to join or not join a union
- decide to leave or remain a member of a union
- belong to the union you choose, even if it's not the one your employer negotiates with on pay, terms and conditions
- belong to more than one union

Your employer isn't allowed to dismiss²¹⁸ you or choose you for redundancy because you:

- are or want to be a union member
- aren't or don't want to be a union member
- took part or wanted to take part in union activities

Your employer mustn't treat you unfavourably (for example refusing you promotion or training opportunities) if you:

- join a union
- take part in its meetings
- leave a union

Industrial Action

- You can't be dismissed for industrial action²¹⁹ if [the unions followed the required steps to take industrial action]
- If you take industrial action, you'll probably have broken your employment contract and your employer is unlikely to pay for the work you didn't do.

²¹⁷ when you lose your job

²¹⁸ to fire

²¹⁹ strike

Going on strike and picketing

A picket line is where workers and union reps²²⁰ stand outside a workplace to tell other people why they are striking. Pickets may also ask people not to:

- do some of their usual work
- go into work

Pickets must not prevent people from going to work or doing their usual work if they want to do so.

It's a criminal offence for pickets to:

- use threatening or abusive behaviour to people walking past or crossing the picket line
- block people or vehicles trying to get into the workplace which is on strike (called 'causing an obstruction' by police)
- carry weapons
- damage property

All excerpts taken or adapted from www.gov.uk > Working, jobs and pensions > Your rights at work and trade unions (accessed May 2013)

Exercise

Complete the gaps with the modals or synonymous expressions in the box to make true sentences. More than one answer can be possible. Try to use as many different expressions as possible.

have to	don't have to	must	mustn't
can	can't	be allowed to (+,-)	be required to (+,-)

1. Employees _____ choose the union they want, but they _____ join a union if they don't want to.
2. Employers _____ fire anyone for participating in a strike but they _____ pay the employees for the work they didn't do.
3. Strikers _____ stop others from going to work but they _____ try and convince them.
4. Strikers _____ demonstrate peacefully.

²²⁰ representatives

Workers' rights then

As industrialization swept through Europe, the United States, and elsewhere, workers became increasingly resentful of how manufacturers profited from their hard work and the growing social inequalities between themselves and their employers. Some of the very earliest forms of worker protest, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, targeted machines. Many men and women feared that new technologies, the hallmark of the industrial revolution, promised not progress and prosperity, but a loss of skill, status, wages, and employment. But, as many discovered, protests against machines could not stop the inexorable march of the technological development that started at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Gradually workers came to accept the fact that machines were there to stay, and turned their attention to efforts to reform the low pay, long hours, and dreadfully unsafe conditions in which they worked.

From the beginning of the industrial revolution, workers organised in labor unions to defend their interests and used strikes to pressure employers to improve basic conditions of work and wages. The workers' concerns were part of larger "quality of life" issues that are surprisingly similar to what working people all over the world face today. Nineteenth-century workers sought respect for their skills and abilities on the job, a decent and honourable standard of living, and the right to leisure for recreation and time with their families. But both states and employers vigorously resisted workers' efforts to take collective action. On both sides of the Atlantic, governments supported employers' efforts to repress labor organization. France, Britain and Germany all made workers' organizations of any kind illegal until the end of the nineteenth century. In the United States and Europe, employers combated unions by firing or locking workers out of the factory and freely used police force to repress workers' peaceful demonstrations. Some workers avoided repression by forming mutual aid or friendly societies – organizations that were designed to provide support to workers and their families at times of illness or during periods of unemployment. Others formed producers' and consumers' cooperatives to enable workers to benefit directly from their labor and to buy goods more cheaply.

Excerpt from Laura L. Frader, 'Protest and Resistance' in *The Industrial Revolution, A History in Documents*, Oxford University Press (Oxford, 2006).

Comprehension

1. What was the workers' initial reason for protesting?
2. What did they fight for later?
3. How did the workers fight?
4. How did the governments and employers retaliate (fight back)?

Comparison

Which rights do we have now that workers didn't use to have in the nineteenth century?

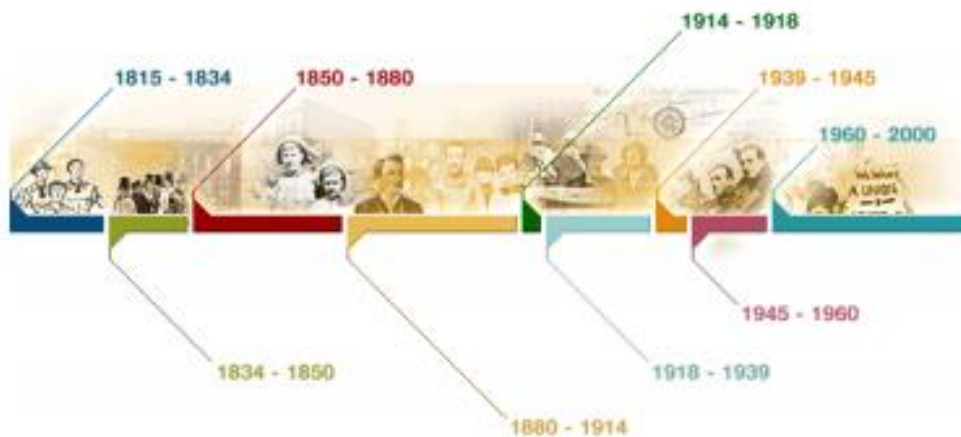
Remember!

Use *used to* for things that were true once, but not anymore.

They used to fear machines.

They didn't use to be able to join a trade union.

A SIMPLIFIED HISTORY OF TRADE UNIONS



1799	The <u>Combination Act</u> prohibited trade unions.
1815-34	Trade unions (with female members) multiplied in the textile industry.
1832	<u>Reform Act</u> – the right to vote was extended to non-aristocratic men, but not to the working class.
1834	The government tried to destroy a powerful union by arresting six men (the Tolpuddle Martyrs) and sending them to an Australian penal colony.
1834	Massive opposition to the <u>Poor Law</u> (poor people could now only receive help or money if they lived in the feared workhouses, where living conditions were very harsh.)
1834-45	Chartism (a working-class movement for political reform) gained popularity.
1842	General strike (because wages were supposed to be cut by 25% by the cotton manufacturers)
1848	Huge Chartist demonstration
1850-80	"New Model" trade unions (not for women)
1867	Second Reform Act: all men allowed to vote
1871	Unions became legal.
1875	Picketing de-criminalised
1880-1914	Trade unions grew faster than ever before (from 750,000 to 6.5 million members)
1888 ff.	Several successful strikes
1890	Huge demonstration in favour of the 8-hour day
1910-14	"The great unrest" - a period of numerous strikes Women fought for the right to vote.
1914	90% of trade unions were for men. 90% of women were unorganised (i.e. not in a union).
1914-18	Women's trade union membership increased by 160% during the war.
1828	All women over 21 were allowed to vote. They had the same rights as men.

adapted from www.unionhistory.info