

Industrial Revolution



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Note: This article was released prior to the 2015-2016 revision to the AP European History exam. In order to see what is still in the Course and Exam Description, explore the course framework [here](#).

If you are an AP European History student, you should use the College Board's [AP European History Course and Exam Description](#) as a guide for your AP Euro review. We looked at it and determined that one of the most important topics you should include in your AP Euro review for the AP European History test is the Industrial Revolution.

We want you to get a 5 on your AP European History exam, so we've made an AP European History crash course on the Industrial Revolution just for you. The crash course will summarize how each of the major countries and regions in Europe was involved in the Industrial Revolution. Additionally, we'll spend some time reviewing what the Industrial Revolution did to social life.

Industrial Revolution Cont.

The First Industrial Revolution: 18th Century (1700s) Great Britain

Great Britain was the first country to experience the Industrial Revolution, and enough time passed before any other European countries experienced industrialization that when they did, it was called the second Industrial Revolution (1870-1914).

Why did Great Britain industrialize so much earlier than the rest of Europe? Take a look at the dates. For most of the 18th century, the United States was still a group of Britain's colonies. Great Britain had a constant influx of [raw materials](#) from the colonies that fueled their Industrial Revolution. Britain had a large supply of coal and iron ore, in addition to the raw materials from the American colonies. These were resources that the rest of Europe didn't have or couldn't take advantage of yet due to politics.

Speaking of politics, Parliament also helped push Britain towards industrialization because they gave money to inventors and supported banks that then supported the emerging factories. Between this government support, the raw materials and the new transportation systems that Great Britain also had during this time, the shift to a factory-based economy was easy.

The Second Industrial Revolution: The Rest of Europe (1870-1914)

The second Industrial Revolution was when the rest of Europe began to catch up with Great Britain. One of the reasons the Industrial Revolution is so popular on the AP European History exam is because it lasted for so long and affected every aspect of life: economics, social, political, etc. As we begin to go over the second Industrial Revolution ask yourself how new technology or the increase in factories could have affected different parts of European life.

France

[France](#) was the next country to industrialize, though they moved into it much slower than Britain did. Although like Britain, France received government support to help industrialize the country.

Industrial Revolution Cont.

The College Board notes that the French government built railroads and canals—the transportation needed to support a factory-based economy.

Germany

Next was Germany. Until Bismarck unified the country, [industrialization was impossible](#). As soon as that happened though, Germany raced towards industrialization and became just as industrialized as Great Britain. Germany became a major player in the coal and steel industries, and like Great Britain and France, Germany had government support, such as the installation of better transportation.

The Rest of Europe

The rest of Europe was slow to industrialize. By 1870, France and Germany had joined Great Britain in shifting their reliance to factories, but southern and eastern Europe still clung to serfdom and feudalism. They also had little support from the government and lacked the resources and transportation needed to industrialize. All of these were things Great Britain, France and Germany had used to spark their industrialization.

Europe as a Whole

Over the next few decades, Europe would switch their economy from one based on man-made products to those produced in factories. New technologies and forms of communication and transportation emerged as well. Things like electricity, the telephone, the radio and the airplane were being discovered and invented. Businesses were now monopolies and major corporations.

What did this mean? Europe, through the Industrial Revolution(s), had come to the modern era—the age we know and live in. By 1914, the rest of Europe had started to catch up to Britain, France and Germany. When [World War I](#) broke out, governments across Europe adopted industrialization, preparing each country for war.

Industrial Revolution Cont.

The AP European History exam will not just want you to know how the Industrial Revolution changed economics or how the government got involved in the movement as well. The exam will expect you to be familiar with the major social changes that occurred during the Industrial Revolution as well.

The Industrial Revolution's Social Impact

Prior to the Industrial Revolution, production was done in the home or in the field. Once the work moved to factories, more and more men left the home for work. While some women did work in the factories, married women stayed at home during the day when their husbands went to work outside of the home. This introduced the doctrine of separate spheres.

That sounds complicated, we know. Here's the bottom line.

The women were expected to stay in the home and take care of any domestic work (taking care of the children, cleaning), so their sphere was the domestic sphere. The men operated in the public sphere, since they went out in public to work in the factories. The world of business and politics were also in the public sphere—the man's sphere.

Keep in mind, too, that there was still inequality among classes. The upper class was now mostly made up of capitalists and owners of corporations, while the working or lower class was made up of factory workers.

Do you think we are still seeing the effects of the Industrial Revolution today, a hundred years later?

Industrial Revolution Cont.

What will the AP European History Exam Expect of You?

Like we said earlier, we used the [AP European History Course and Exam Description](#) to make this crash course. When we searched for the “Industrial Revolution” in the course and exam description, we had thirty-four hits!

It gets better.

We searched for “industrialization,” and got sixty-nine hits. When we simply typed “industrial,” we got one-hundred-and sixty-eight hits.

Are you starting to see why we made this AP European History crash course on the Industrial Revolution?

The purpose of the AP European History Course and Exam description is to outline all of the student learning objectives, relevant topics and key concepts for the course. The College Board has basically mapped out the course for you. Well, we’ve read that map, and it’s telling us that the Industrial Revolution is one of the most important topics you need to study for the AP European History exam.

We also know that the Industrial Revolution was used for free-response questions (FRQs) on the 2003, 2005, and 2011 AP European History exams. Even though the FRQ is no longer used for the exam, you should still prepare to write on the Industrial Revolution because one of the new parts of the exam is the short answer section. The College Board has some sample short answer questions in their course and exam description. One of the sample short essay questions is on the Industrial Revolution.

What would you write if the AP European History exam asked you a short answer question on the social impact of the Industrial Revolution?