



# A Golden Age Or An Age of Misery ?

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## Introduction

Victoria was only 18 when she succeeded her uncle on the throne of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Her very long reign (1837-1901) was called the **Victorian Age** and was a period of British expansion and was marked by a restoration of dignity and popularity to the monarchy.

Several British citizens still live surrounded by mementoes of those “glorious” times, and many of them cannot conceal a sense of loss when they talk about an age when Great Britain was truly great.

Do they have good reasons to think so? Or are they utterly wrong? Are we happier with all our technology? Were they more wholesome, thanks to their great sense of duty and moral respectability? In a few words, was it **good** or was it **bad** to live in Victorian Britain?

This Webquest will lead you through the many facets of Victorian Britain towards a range of possible answers to the previous questions. You will not have to “learn” what you read as much as to create a picture in your mind and an impression in your feelings as to the “flavour” of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## The task

After reading a common introduction to the Victorian Age, called **the Scenario**, you will have to work in pairs. Each pair of students will tackle one facet of the period. You will use the World Wide Web to retrieve information (see the online resources listed below), then you will have to create a **presentation** of the topic to the rest of the class, so that at the end of the activity the whole class will be able to answer the question “ **Was it good or was it bad to live in the Victorian Age?** “ with some depth.

Please take notice that what is asked for here is **not** a mere summary of the information you found in the Web, which is very detailed, but an overview of what in your opinion are the most significant features of what you found, with a great attention to the **emotional response** the information provokes in you. Hopefully, this response will create a definite **impression** on the rest of the class and contribute to the whole picture.

## The Scenario

Who was Victoria? A full introduction can be read [here](#).

As you have seen, her reign was very long and was therefore characterized by a variety of changing aspects.

For clarity's sake, the Victorian Age is usually divided into two parts: the early Victorian Age and the late Victorian Age. This distinction is very important in literature, where a difference can be noticed between early-Victorian novels and late-Victorian novels. Here you have an [introduction](#) to the whole of the period. Do not bother about the names you do not know yet: you should focus on the main ideas at this stage. As a help, re-read the introduction and write down a list of **key-words**.

All the same, this information is useful but it does not explain why even some American citizens are spell-bound when considering Victoria's times. Have a look at this U.S. [web page](#), then close the browser to get back here.

What was strange in the page you have just read?

When you have finished commenting on the page, here is another U.S. [web page](#) whose author seems to have very different ideas!

As you can see, the topic is rather controversial, to say the least. Now you are ready to sail on your own, but feel free to come back here to consult the best [timeline](#) for the 19<sup>th</sup> century I have been able to find in the Web.

## The Process

In this section you will find detailed instructions for the carrying-out of the actual task.

- A. You will work in pairs. Each pair of students will have a **Journal** where, in turns, they will record what they do every time they meet. This Journal is not meant to be a mere list of things done or to be done. It is rather meant to provide a continuous “feedback” on the going-on activities. As I imagine it, it is colourful, full of comments, rejoicings and/or complaints. It should contain your emotions, as well as technical tips and suggestions for future quests. It might be a source of inspiration for the teacher, and of amusement for fellow students. Please be aware that the Journal will be assessed at the end of the Quest (see also the section on Evaluation).
- B. As already stated, students are not requested to prepare a summary consisting of pasted information. Nevertheless, you should be aware of the **what – who –where – when – how – why** elements implicit in the topic you are studying. This is for the sake of the completeness and clarity of your future presentation. Have mercy on your class-mates who will be listening to your speech! They should be able to understand the basics of your topic, while hopefully you avoid cramming their minds with over-detailed information...
- C. If, during your presentation, you mean to present pictures or photographs, remember that these are nearly always protected by **copyright**. Consider writing to the authors of the site you take them from, in order to get their permission to use them for educational purposes. They usually grant their permission without any problems. You should also acknowledge the authors of a site for any quotations.

Now, here are the topics for each pair of students:

### ***Group 1: London and Victorian Towns in general***

For detailed guidelines and online resources, go [here](#).

### ***Group 2: Social Classes***

For detailed guidelines and online resources, go [here](#).

### ***Group 3: The Industrial Revolution and Working Conditions. Child labour.***

For detailed guidelines and online resources, go [here](#).

### ***Group 4: The House, Furniture and Objects***

For detailed guidelines and online resources, go [here](#).

### ***Group 5: The Family***

For detailed guidelines and online resources, go [here](#).

### ***Group 6: Children and Education***

For detailed guidelines and online resources, go [here](#).

### ***Group 7: Victoria's Reign: Home affairs***

For detailed guidelines and online resources, go [here](#).

### ***Group 8: Religion and Philosophy***

For detailed guidelines and online resources, go [here](#).

### ***Group 9: The Empire***

For detailed guidelines and online resources, go [here](#).

## **Conclusion**

Now each Group should have discussed the initial question: Was it good or bad to live in Victorian Britain?

Each pair of you should come up with a definite answer, which will be the **opening statement** of your presentation. Then the presentation will provide ample evidence for your opinion. You may prepare a Powerpoint presentation, or hold a lecture accompanied by projected pictures, or introduce a web site and surf it in front of the class while commenting on it. Ideally, a presentation should not exceed twenty to thirty minutes, but remember that your class-mates are unlikely to be familiar with the topics you have studied. There will be a problem of vocabulary, so you will need an extra ten minutes or so to introduce basic vocabulary, otherwise they will simply not follow you!

Ideally, at the end of the whole Webquest activity all students should have a fairly complete picture of the Victorian Age.

## **Evaluation**

This will be of two kinds: on-going evaluation and outcome evaluation.

The on-going assessment will focus on the way you contribute to class-work and will draw inspiration from a specific [rubric](#) that you are requested to read with great attention. As you can see, it has to do with behaviour rather than results. Its aim is not to pass moral judgement on you, but to assess how effectively you are learning to do team-work. Nowadays team work is essential in all areas of learning and work. Even researchers and inventors are no longer "bright individuals" but members of successful researching teams.

Outcome evaluation is the assessment of the outcome of your task, in terms of language and content. This is the kind of assessment you are already used to, and the elements I am going to take into consideration are the following:

	<b>Beginning 4-5</b>	<b>Developing 5.5-6.5</b>	<b>Accomplished 7-8</b>	<b>Exemplary 9-10</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Focused Topic</b>	Gross historical inaccuracies, incomplete or lack of evidence	Some historical inaccuracies, some evidence	Historically correct, good evidence	Historically correct, complete, good evidence, sources acknowledged	
<b>Well organized</b>	Lacks topic sentences and has no logical sequence	Presentation has only one topic sentence and its sequence is confusing	Presentation includes some topic sentences and is somewhat sequential	Every section begins with a clearly stated topic sentence and the sections follow a logical sequence	
<b>Length</b>	The presentation is short and incomplete	The presentation is too detailed and tiring to follow	The presentation is a bit short but fairly complete, or a bit long but interesting	Interesting and clear, the presentation does not exceed the allotted time	
<b>Use of technology</b>	No use of technology	Technology is used only scantily	Wide use of technology, with some practical problems	Very effective use	
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Inappropriate, lack of previous presentation	Mostly appropriate, presented confusedly before the presentation	Mostly appropriate, good –albeit incomplete – introduction before the presentation	Appropriate, excellent introduction before the presentation	
<b>Pronunciation and layout</b>	Very difficult to follow	Mostly difficult to follow and understand	Mostly easy to understand	Easy to read and follow the information	
<b>Correct grammar and spelling</b>	Very frequent grammar and/or spelling errors	A few grammar and/or spelling errors	Only one or two errors in spelling/grammar	All grammar and spelling are correct	
				<b>Total</b>	

Finally, the Groups' Journals will be assessed, and the evaluation will depend on the answers to the following questions: Are they communicative? Do they honestly describe the process? Are the grammar/spelling/vocabulary correct?

# The Groups

## Group 1: London and Victorian Towns in general

London underwent great transformation in Victorian times. For an introduction to this topic, go to:

[www.britainexpress.com/London/victorian-london.htm](http://www.britainexpress.com/London/victorian-london.htm)

Much of the city we see on postcards today was designed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Here you will learn about the "Gothic revival" in architecture:

[www.britainexpress.com/History/bio/pugin.htm](http://www.britainexpress.com/History/bio/pugin.htm)

For beautiful views of the Houses of Parliament, open [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) , clic on IMAGES (at the top of the page) and search for "Palace of Westminster". Remember what I said about the copyright!

Urban transformation matched social changes, as rich Londoners became more and more particular about classes:

[www.victorianweb.org/history/clubs.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/clubs.html)

Here is the other end of the ladder:

<http://learningcurve.pro.gov.uk/snapshots/snapshot14/snapshot14.htm>

Industrialization had caused the birth and then the astoundingly rapid growth of several towns in Britain. Were they nice to see and live in? Open [www.bbc.co.uk/history/lj/victorian\\_britainlj/preview.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/lj/victorian_britainlj/preview.shtml), then find the section named "Social Conditions" and clic on "urban planning" to find your answer.

Poor urban conditions meant filth and disease. To learn more, visit the Victorian city in the "Learning zone" of the following site:

[www.cadburylearningzone.co.uk/history/index.htm](http://www.cadburylearningzone.co.uk/history/index.htm)

Here you will find more about poor hygienic conditions and disease:

<http://learningcurve.pro.gov.uk/victorianbritain/healthy/default.htm>

How sensitive were the higher classes to these problems? Look here to have a hint:

[www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc6.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc6.html)

Now that you are expert, you can enjoy a game! Go back to the section named "Social Conditions" in

[www.bbc.co.uk/history/lj/victorian\\_britainlj/preview.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/lj/victorian_britainlj/preview.shtml) and clic on "balance coffins".

NOW that you have finished exploring and learning, you need to PLAN your presentation. Some of the material listed here is shared by **Group 4**, who are working on "The House", so compare your plan with theirs. Some repetition is unavoidable, but ideally, your works should not be the photocopy of each other.

## Go back to the Webquest

## Group 2 : Social Classes

Nothing can be understood about Victorian times without a clear sense of what "belonging to a class" meant.

Between 1889 and 1899 a man called Charles Booth edited coloured maps of London. Each colour corresponded to a class of people. Read the captions of the colours and the description of each class and learn about the multi-stratified population of late-19<sup>th</sup> century London:

<http://booth.lse.ac.uk/static/a/4.html>

How many colours were dedicated to the lower classes? How many to the higher classes? The rich lived around a great park. Do you know its name?

Go back to the description of the class named "B". Are there any moral implications in the description written by Booth?

The Victorians had a real obsession on belonging to a "proper" class. First, you had to be born a gentleman. Then you had to maintain the high standards of "gentlemanship". Find a monolingual dictionary and look for the words "genteel", "gentility" and "gentleman". Then read carefully the following web page:

[www.victorianweb.org/history/Gentleman.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/Gentleman.html)

Due to this obsession, they were ready to define a very strict code of behaviour, which is realistically described in several novels of the time. Either you had "good manners", or you had not and could not be considered a gentleman or a lady.

[www.angelfire.com/ar3/townevictorian/victorianetiquette.html](http://www.angelfire.com/ar3/townevictorian/victorianetiquette.html)

This is a U.S. site. Look at the "sources" at the bottom of the web page for a nice surprise.

"Keeping up with appearances" was often harder on ladies. A good marriage was a life-long solution, but what if your husband died before you? For a full descriptions of women's difficulties, clic on

[www.victorianweb.org/gender/ugoretz1.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/gender/ugoretz1.html)

Gentlemen often wished to distinguish themselves from "common" people. Guess the meaning of the adjective "fastidious" in the following article, that you share with the members of **Group 1**:

[www.victorianweb.org/history/clubs.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/clubs.html)

The greater the social distance, the harsher the judgement:

[www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rcov.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rcov.html)

[www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc11.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc11.html)

[www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc2.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc2.html)

[www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc8.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc8.html)

But this was not enough. To be clearer:

[www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc6.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc6.html)

This of course was due to poor housing conditions. To learn more on this topic, you can resort to **Group 1**, who are working on the towns.

Why were the Victorians so racist? One possible answer is here:

[www.victorianweb.org/history/race/victor9.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/race/victor9.html)

NOW that you have finished exploring and learning, you need to PLAN your presentation. Some of the material listed here might overlap with **Group 5**, who are working on "The Family", so compare your plan with theirs. Some repetition is unavoidable, but ideally, your works should not be the photocopy of each other.

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## Group 3 : The Industrial Revolution and Working Conditions. Child Labour.

An introduction to industrialization in Britain can be read here:

[www.schoolhistory.co.uk/lessons/ironbridge/overview.htm](http://www.schoolhistory.co.uk/lessons/ironbridge/overview.htm)

After reading the introduction, continue to the first multiple-choice quiz, then quit.

The technological advance that permitted these great changes was the steam-powered machine, which was used both in transport and in factories. A couple of animations will give you an idea of how this worked:

[www.bbc.co.uk/history/society\\_culture/industrialisation/launch\\_ani\\_rocket.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/society_culture/industrialisation/launch_ani_rocket.shtml)

[www.bbc.co.uk/history/society\\_culture/industrialisation/launch\\_ani\\_spinning\\_mill.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/society_culture/industrialisation/launch_ani_spinning_mill.shtml)

Women and children were cheap workforce and were heavily employed in manufacturing and mining:

[www.nettlesworth.durham.sch.uk/time/victorian//vindust.html](http://www.nettlesworth.durham.sch.uk/time/victorian//vindust.html)

You can learn more about children in factories from the following web page. Read the article and try the activities.

<http://learningcurve.pro.gov.uk/snapshots/snapshot13/snapshot13.htm>

Now you are ready for a game:

[www.bbc.co.uk/history/society\\_culture/industrialisation/launch\\_gms\\_cotton\\_millionaire.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/society_culture/industrialisation/launch_gms_cotton_millionaire.shtml)

And a quiz!

[www.schoolhistory.co.uk/quizzes/industrial/textiles.htm](http://www.schoolhistory.co.uk/quizzes/industrial/textiles.htm)

An idea of what working in mines was like can be gained here. Read the article, then try Activity One.

<http://learningcurve.pro.gov.uk/victorianbritain/industrial/default.htm>

This was "civilized" Europe!

[www.historylearningsite.co.uk/children.htm](http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/children.htm)

But working in a mine remained a dangerous job even for adults. Read the story of a mine wreckage in which more than 300 people died (and it was not the worst in British history!). Open the site, then click on the second book in the list to your left, and finally click on the article entitled "The Oaks, Barnsley, 1866".

<http://freespace.virgin.net/kathryn.c/>

When Victoria went to the throne, working conditions everywhere in Britain were appalling, despite the Factory Act of 1833. During her reign, there were several improvements. Which were the most important Acts? Were they effective? You can use the Timeline in the Webquest introduction for help. Or you can ask **Group 7**, who are working on Reforms. Now it is time to plan your presentation!

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## Group 4: the House, Furniture and Objects

Let us start straightaway with a virtual tour. You will need a computer with loudspeakers.

[www.bbc.co.uk/education/dynamo/history/stepback.htm](http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/dynamo/history/stepback.htm)

A modern family really tried to live in a restored Victorian house, using none of the modern appliances, objects or clothes. A television document was made about their experiment. Surf the site in the Web, then ask the teacher for more information.

[www.pbs.org/wnet/1900house/](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/1900house/)

Here is a closer view of a Victorian kitchen:

[www.victorianstation.com/kitchen.htm](http://www.victorianstation.com/kitchen.htm)

and if you would like to see more pictures of authentic Victorian rooms, just clic the button named "next room" at the bottom of the web page.

An authentic Victorian mansion can be seen at [www.borneo.co.uk/cecil\\_higgins/vmansion.html](http://www.borneo.co.uk/cecil_higgins/vmansion.html). Where is the toilet?

To learn more about hygienic conditions, read this:

<http://learningcurve.pro.gov.uk/victorianbritain/healthy/default.htm>

Interior design was heavily influenced by a movement called "Arts and Crafts". To learn more about it, clic on

[www.britainexpress.com/History/victorian\\_art\\_and\\_architecture.htm](http://www.britainexpress.com/History/victorian_art_and_architecture.htm)

The main exponent was Morris, who created a famous design firm, "Morris & Co"

[www.britainexpress.com/History/morris.htm](http://www.britainexpress.com/History/morris.htm)

Morris' creations are still sold, with great success:

[www.charles-rupert.com/williammorris/wallpapers/index.html](http://www.charles-rupert.com/williammorris/wallpapers/index.html)

Select the wallpaper design you like the most, then write Charles Rupert an e-mail asking for his permission to use the picture in your presentation. Do not forget to use the magical words "for educational use only".

Not everybody had such nice houses, though. Look at the other end of the social class ladder:

<http://learningcurve.pro.gov.uk/snapshots/snapshot14/snapshot14.htm>

NOW that you have finished exploring and learning, you need to PLAN your presentation. Some of the material listed here is shared by **Group 1**, who are working on "London and Victorian towns in general", so compare your plan with theirs. Some repetition is unavoidable, but ideally, your works should not be the photocopy of each other.

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## Group 5 : The Family

As a general introduction to family life, visit

[www.nettlesworth.durham.sch.uk/time/victorian/vfam.html](http://www.nettlesworth.durham.sch.uk/time/victorian/vfam.html)

You share this page with **Group 6**, so make sure you use it in different ways during your presentations.

What was it like to be a woman in Victorian Britain?

<http://learningcurve.pro.gov.uk/victorianbritain/divided/default.htm>

A game will clarify the main ideas: find the section called "Victorian Women" and, after surfing the 11-page article "A woman's place", play the game.

[www.bbc.co.uk/history/lj/victorian\\_britainlj/preview.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/lj/victorian_britainlj/preview.shtml)

Still, some people retain their rosy view of matrimonial life in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Here is a description of courtship, from a U.S site:

[www.angelfire.com/ar3/townevictorian/ladiesgentlemen.html](http://www.angelfire.com/ar3/townevictorian/ladiesgentlemen.html)

For the best effect, read your article on a computer with loudspeakers.

And here is harsh reality:

[http://caxton.stockton.edu/browning/stories/storyReader\\$3](http://caxton.stockton.edu/browning/stories/storyReader$3)

Of course, life in a family could vary a lot, depending on the father's earnings and social class:

[www.nettlesworth.durham.sch.uk/time/victorian/vfam.html](http://www.nettlesworth.durham.sch.uk/time/victorian/vfam.html)

It is true that middle- and upper-class families could live a very happy life (even without a television set!):

[www.angelfire.com/ar3/townevictorian/parlorgames.html](http://www.angelfire.com/ar3/townevictorian/parlorgames.html)

For the best effect, read your article on a computer with loudspeakers.

But what if your family was really poor?

<http://history.powys.org.uk/school1/poor/workmenu.shtml>

NOW it is time to think about organizing a presentation of your topic. Meet **Group 6**, who are working on "Children and Education", and try to link your plan with theirs. You might even decide on a single presentation, where each of you takes care a sub-topic.

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## Group 6 : Children and Education

How did children spend their time? It depended on the social class they belonged to. To have an idea of the differences, read this introduction:

[www.nettlesworth.durham.sch.uk/time/victorian/vfam.html](http://www.nettlesworth.durham.sch.uk/time/victorian/vfam.html)

If they were lucky enough to have been born in the right family, they could enjoy themselves in the following ways:

[www.nettlesworth.durham.sch.uk/time/victorian/vsport.html](http://www.nettlesworth.durham.sch.uk/time/victorian/vsport.html)

[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/victorians/standard/play/learning/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/victorians/standard/play/learning/index.shtml)

But, irrespective of census, the children's physical lives were in jeopardy:

[www.ancestry.com/library/view/news/articles/5550.asp](http://www.ancestry.com/library/view/news/articles/5550.asp)

Schools reflected social divisions:

[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/victorians/standard/school/learning/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/victorians/standard/school/learning/index.shtml)

[www.nettlesworth.durham.sch.uk/time/victorian/vschool.html](http://www.nettlesworth.durham.sch.uk/time/victorian/vschool.html)

Very poor children attended the so-called "ragged schools". Read

[www.maybole.org/history/articles/historyofraggedschools.htm](http://www.maybole.org/history/articles/historyofraggedschools.htm)

and then visit an authentic ragged school at

[www.maybole.org/history/articles/mayboleraggedschool.htm](http://www.maybole.org/history/articles/mayboleraggedschool.htm)

At the other end of the social ladder there were public (= private) schools:

[www.victorianweb.org/history/pubschl.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/pubschl.html)

Yet, somebody thinks that attending a public school is not the decisive factor in becoming a celebrity:

[www.victorianweb.org/history/eh4.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/eh4.html)

This section is not complete without an overview of working children, but this is the topic of **Group 3**. Therefore, before organizing the plan of your presentation, meet your class-mates of Group 3 and decide on the sequence of your presentations. You might even decide to plan a single presentation for both topics.

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## Group 7 : Victoria's Reign: Home Affairs

Despite a difficult start, Queen Victoria became more and more identified with the nation – or the nation got more and more identified with Victoria, which amounts to the same. Here is her life in greater detail:

[www.victorianstation.com/queen.html](http://www.victorianstation.com/queen.html)

If you like old pictures, this is your site:

[www.snaithprimary.eril.net/qcontent.htm](http://www.snaithprimary.eril.net/qcontent.htm)

The great exhibition of 1851 marked a turning point in the self-perception of the British:

[www.britainexpress.com/History/great\\_exhibition.htm](http://www.britainexpress.com/History/great_exhibition.htm)

[www.victorianstation.com/palace.html](http://www.victorianstation.com/palace.html)

But not everybody was happy and ready to cheer!

<http://www.victorianweb.org/history/cornlaws1.html>

<http://www.victorianweb.org/history/hist3.html>

In particular, the middle classes urged Parliament to pass better laws on the franchise, with good reasons:

[www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/PRrotten.htm](http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/PRrotten.htm)

The process towards fairer representation took a long time.

[www.slider.com/enc/44000/Reform\\_Acts.htm](http://www.slider.com/enc/44000/Reform_Acts.htm)

In the meanwhile, life conditions were improving, thanks to scientific and technical progress.

An entertaining animation will give you an idea:

[www.bbc.co.uk/history/society\\_culture/society/launch\\_ani\\_victorian\\_achieve.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/society_culture/society/launch_ani_victorian_achieve.shtml)

Even the lower classes were beginning to have access to some forms of entertainment:

<http://learningcurve.pro.gov.uk/victorianbritain/happy/default.htm>

This concluding article will give you an idea of the general atmosphere of the late Victorian Age:

[www.britainexpress.com/History/Late\\_Victorian\\_Age.htm](http://www.britainexpress.com/History/Late_Victorian_Age.htm)

You should organize your presentation along three lines: Victoria's life, reforms and technological progress. Reforms are also dealt with by **Group 6** (reforms on education), and **Group 5** (the reforms that improved the condition of women). You can also use the timeline suggested in the Introduction to the Webquest to have an idea of the sequence.

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## Group 8 : Religion and Philosophy

It is impossible to introduce a debate on religion in Britain without being aware of the history of the Church of England. An outline – just to remind you – is in [www.victorianweb.org/religion/relov.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/religion/relov.html) , in the article entitled "Church of England: an Introduction and Brief History".

Religious minorities, like the Catholic and the Dissenters or Non-conformists, who on the contrary tended towards Calvinism, were heavily discriminated against. A British view of Catholicism can explain several cultural misunderstandings...

[www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc12.htm](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc12.htm)

You can imagine what the reaction was when some toleration was introduced:

[www.victorianweb.org/history/changes.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/changes.html)

But this was not enough. Auguste Comte, a French philosopher, developed a line of thought that later provided one of the bases for atheism (another one was Marxism, of course). Go back to the first web page and this time clic on "Comteian Positivism".

Positivism was so successful, that for some people it became an authentic religion! Evidence on this point in

<http://membres.lycos.fr/clotilde>

Of course the Christian Churches were not very happy! Here is a Catholic comment:

[www.newadvent.org/cathen/12312c.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12312c.htm)

Then you might have already heard about Darwin. For a full biography, you can consult an online encyclopaedia. Open the following web page, enter "DARWIN" in the space and clic on "GO". In the next web page, clic on "Darwin".

<http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/refpages/artcenter.aspx>

The mere idea of a possible evolution made Christian fundamentalists extremely angry. As a reaction, they developed "creationist" theories. Do you think that the debate is over and everybody recognises the truth of evolution? Then surf this site!

[www.pathlights.com/](http://www.pathlights.com/)

Here, open "Creation-Evolution Encyclopedia" and go down to the second half of the list, till you find "Anthropology Class Discussion". Enjoy yourselves.

They are not an isolated group. All sort of hues can be found in [www.talkorigins.org/faqs/wic.html](http://www.talkorigins.org/faqs/wic.html) . You need not read EVERYTHING. This is just to give you an idea of how very close to us the 19<sup>th</sup> century is! And the language is fairly simple.

If you feel curious and want to surf another site of pure 21<sup>st</sup>-century creationists, ask me. Otherwise, go on building the PLAN of your presentation. Remember that all the material presented here is protected by copyright – yes, also the articles! – so you will have to write your own texts. And have mercy on your class-mates, who have no idea of the complexity of the topic!

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## Group 9 : The Empire

The territories that were under British rule during Victoria's reign were so many that it is difficult to summarise the situation. To give you an idea of the vastness of what was later called the "British Empire", have a look at

[www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/maproom.htm](http://www.britishempire.co.uk/maproom/maproom.htm)

And here, for reference only, there is the complete list of the territories and of the political changes they have undergone in time. You will notice that a minority still recognize the British Queen or King as their head, while most of them have become completely independent during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the notable exception of the United States.

[www.friesian.com/british.htm](http://www.friesian.com/british.htm)

An introduction to British expansion along the centuries can be found in

[www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/history/empire/Empire.html](http://www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/history/empire/Empire.html)

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the world's riches went straight to Britain, which was the most powerful country in the world. But the British had to fight in order to defend their possessions and their rule. Among the most representative conflicts, I have chosen the Crimean war, the Zulu wars and the Indian Mutiny. I have deliberately omitted the Boer War, which would be enough for a whole Webquest in itself because it marked a turning point in the perception the British had of themselves as colonizers of the world.

Here is an introduction to the Crimean war, with interesting remarks on Italy's role:

[www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/history/crimea/intro.html](http://www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/history/crimea/intro.html)

It was a bloody war, with great human loss. The conditions in which soldiers lived and died were appalling. This was the situation as Florence Nightingale found (please read her own words):

[www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/history/crimea/florrie.html](http://www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/history/crimea/florrie.html)

Two paintings documenting what really happened will hopefully give you some idea of what battles were like. Mind the copyright! If you want to paste them in your presentation, you must ask for permission.

[www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/history/crimea/tracpaint.html](http://www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/history/crimea/tracpaint.html)

[www.xenophongi.org/crimea/war/panorama/pano02.htm](http://www.xenophongi.org/crimea/war/panorama/pano02.htm)

In the following site there is a day-to-day description of the long siege to Sevastopol. Read only the entry for 9 September 1855, the day of the surrender.

[www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/history/crimea/usher/sebast2.html](http://www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/history/crimea/usher/sebast2.html)

The Indian Mutiny led to British rule in India – the actual "Empire". It started for an apparently stupid reason. Which was it?

[www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/history/empire/1857.html](http://www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/history/empire/1857.html)

And this is a comment by the famous novelist Trollope on the Zulu wars:

[www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/sculpture/misc/frere2.html#comments](http://www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/sculpture/misc/frere2.html#comments)

A brief outline and photos can be seen here:

[www.kwazulu.co.uk/home.html](http://www.kwazulu.co.uk/home.html)

But colonies need not be far away. Ireland was the closest colony, and the Irish... well, this is what people of the time thought about the Irish:

[www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc4.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc4.html)

[www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc6.html](http://www.victorianweb.org/history/race/rc6.html)

So, what did "colony" really mean? Visit the following web page and read three articles in this order:

1. Colony, Colonialism, and Colonization: some Definitions and Extensions
2. Colony defined
3. The Metaphorical Use of Colonialism and Related Terms

[www.postcolonialweb.org/poldiscourse/colonialov.html](http://www.postcolonialweb.org/poldiscourse/colonialov.html)

Try and summarize the main points for your class-mates without just pasting ready-made definitions (the articles are protected by copyright!)

The great theorist of the "civilizing" mission of the British in the world was Rudyard Kipling. He compared the British empire to another great empire of the past, in order to explain his notion of "the white man's burden":

[www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/authors/kipling/rkimperialism.html](http://www.postcolonialweb.org/victorian/authors/kipling/rkimperialism.html)

Now you are ready to plan your own presentation. Remember that your class-mates do not have the whole of the information you have gone through. You will need to SIMPLIFY and to communicate your personal impressions along with a few data to be memorized. What was it like to be a citizen of an empire if you were a banker in London? A poor coal-miner? A white collar posted to India in the 1850s? A soldier in the trenches in front of Sevastopol? The wife of a well-to-do man in a middle-sized English town?

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## Collaboration Rubric

Name \_\_\_\_\_

	Beginning 1	Developing 2	Accomplished 3	Exemplary 4	Score
<b>Contribute</b>					
Research & Gather Information	Does not collect any information that relates to the topic.	Collects very little information--some relates to the topic.	Collects some basic information--most relates to the topic.	Collects a great deal of information--all relates to the topic.	
Share Information	Does not relay any information to teammates.	Relays very little information--some relates to the topic.	Relays some basic information--most relates to the topic.	Relays a great deal of information--all relates to the topic.	
Be Punctual	Does not hand in any assignments.	Hands in most assignments late.	Hands in most assignments on time.	Hands in all assignments on time.	
<b>Take Responsibility</b>					
Fulfill Team Role's Duties	Does not perform any duties of assigned team role.	Performs very little duties.	Performs nearly all duties.	Performs all duties of assigned team role.	
Participate in Science Conference	Does not speak during the science conference.	Either gives too little information or information which is irrelevant to topic.	Offers some information--most is relevant.	Offers a fair amount of important information--all is relevant.	
Share Equally	Always relays on others to do the work.	Rarely does the assigned work--often needs reminding.	Usually does the assigned work--rarely needs reminding.	Always does the assigned work without having to be reminded.	
<b>Value Others' Viewpoints</b>					
Listen to Other Teammates	Is always talking--never allows anyone else to speak.	Usually doing most of the talking--rarely allows others to speak.	Listens, but sometimes talks too much.	Listens and speaks a fair amount.	
Cooperate with Teammates	Usually argues with teammates.	Sometimes argues.	Rarely argues.	Never argues with teammates.	
Make Fair Decisions	Usually wants to have things their way.	Often sides with friends instead of considering all views.	Usually considers all views.	Always helps team to reach a fair decision.	
				<b>Total</b>	

Written by Ms. Sherry E. Spector Last Updated 8/9/00  
 Found in <http://users.erols.com/sespec/webquests/imperialismafrica/>

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