

Introduction

Many of the things we do every day have an impact on our planet. In this book we will explore what effect technology has had on our planet, both good and bad.

Pre-Industrial Times

Three hundred years ago, most people lived in the country. There was no electricity. There were no cars or trains, and no factories to produce goods that people could buy. Food was either harvested or killed locally, and then prepared just before it was eaten. People had to spin and weave their own cloth. This was often done in the evenings after work, but because there was no gas or electricity to provide warmth or light, people generally went to bed early.

All of these things started to change with the Industrial Revolution.

Reaping and binding hay by hand



The Industrial Revolution

The Industrial Revolution began in Britain in the 1700s, and spread quickly to Europe and America. By 1850, many countries were **industrialised**.

The introduction of steam, iron and coal into industry revolutionised how things were made and how things worked. Machines powered by steam engines were set up in factories, and produced goods much faster than they could be made by hand. Steam trains transported the goods from town to town. The machines, steam boilers and railways were made from **steel**, while burning coal provided the energy that machines and furnaces needed to work.

People's lives became very different. Instead of living in the country and working at farming, they moved to the cities to work in factories.

Workers using razor grinders in a steel factory

