Social classes in England during the Industrial Revolution

**Upper Class**

Aristocrats (from Greek aristos-best + kratos-rule, power...rule by a privileged class)

very rich industrial and business families.

- nobility
- own railroads, banks, etc.
- business owners--factories
- children are educated
- expensive clothes and plenty of food

**Middle/Merchant Class**

Bourgeoisie (from Old French burg(e)= town dweller)

Business & professional people.

- merchants, tradesmen & professionals
- men went out to earn money while women stayed at home and raised children
- in charge of factories
- involved in government positions
- children are educated
- concerned with gaining wealth
- controlled working class so they would not rise up against them
- sense of superiority & responsibility over the working class
- live comfortable in large homes, curtains, wallpaper, family portraits, etc.

**Lower/Working Class**

Proletariat (from Latin proletarius: citizen of the lowest class)

skilled/unskilled laborers who work for low wages.

- all members of the family worked (men, women and children)
- long work days (12+ hours)
- low pay
- children rarely educated
- dangerous work
- unhealthy environments
- exploited by the Middle Class
- live in poverty (poor)
- can't afford healthcare
- water supply can be contaminated with infectious diseases (dysentery, cholera, typhus)
- live in tenements (apartments) with several other families, overcrowded and dirty
- tattered clothing, falling apart