



History of the American Worker

1. The advent of the steam engine and the growing use of waterpower to operate machinery led to the factory system, which accounted for an ever-growing share of American production. Select one of the following Eighteenth Century (1700 to 1799) inventions, and tell specifically how this invention changed the lives of Americans. Use your own paper and write at least two full paragraphs:

Seed drill
Piano
Fire extinguisher
Thermometer
Lightening
Leyden Jar
Steam engine

Spinning jenny
Electric telegraph
Flushing toilet
Threshing machine
Self-winding clock
Gas lighting
Cotton gin

2. Select one of the following questions to answer. You may want to conduct some quick research about your topic in history books or on the Internet. Use your own paper and write at least two full paragraphs:

How did the Transcontinental Railroad help the American economy to gather momentum?

How did assembly lines in factories, where each worker was responsible for one specific step in the production process, transform a wide variety of American industries?

Why were labor unions—organizations that fought for the fair treatment of working men and women—necessary and how did they restore the dignity of the American worker?

3. What is the role of the skilled worker in America today, and how is it different than it was 200 years ago? Use your own paper and write at least one paragraph: