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## **Research and Writing: The Life of the Industrial Worker in Nineteenth-Century England**

I find it surreal to think that these testimonies are real. People were really suffering in silence because they could not afford to say what they really thought or were experiencing, which is totally unfair. We are very fortunate to have been born in a time where this no longer exists and where we can raise our voices when something is happening.

This report tells us about Joshua Drake, Matthew Crabtree, John Hall, Elizabeth Bentley, and Peter Smart, all of whom were slaves to work and minimum wages that didn't help at all.

We read how Joshua told us about the first problem, long hours of work with minimum wages; something that struck me about this story is that the parents had to make their young children work because that way they could survive the day, and what touched my heart the most was to read that if the pay was not so miserable, they would never make their children work, but it was the only thing they could do to survive. Matthew Crabtree's story is much more painful because he started working when he was only eight years old, that is, when he was still a child, and he was made to work approximately sixteen hours with only one hour of rest; the punishments were totally severe if he was late or if he was not at the same pace of the machine because he was tired; this brought him traumas as a child because he could not afford to get up late or to talk to his parents at the end of the

day because he was so tired. John Hall tells us about the atrocity of how they tortured children when they did not do what they were required to, which seems to me to be an aberration. Elizabeth Bentley tells us from her own experience how she started working from the age of six, and like Matthew, she too had long working days with only forty minutes breaks; she explained how once she was forced to leave food to go back to work and when she got careless, her supervisor took that food and gave it to the pigs, which shows us the contempt they had for these working people. Finally, Peter Smart tells us about how they would lock them up and not let them run away, and in case they decided to try to run away, when they got them back, they would brutally beat them so that they would never try again and know who had the power, and they would make them work for ridiculously excessive times.

We can conclude that the working conditions were terrible, and the expectations of the employers were too high. The worst thing about all this is that it is not like today, where someone feels uncomfortable in their work schedule and can say something about it or quit; in this case, no one could do it because they were forced to work. The employers expected that the workers would never get tired and work like robots to the beat of the machines, something that was totally impossible.