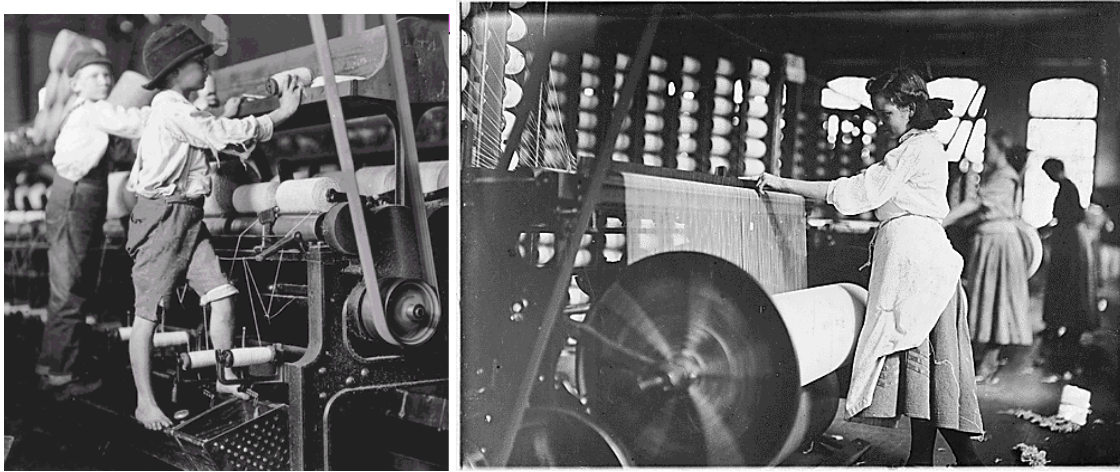


Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Child Labor in Textile Mills



The 1800's was a period of rapid industrial growth in the United States. Competition was fierce among businesses to get customers to buy their products. One way to attract customers was to sell your product for cheaper than the "other guys". It was common for factory owners to hire child workers because children would receive less pay than adult workers and, therefore, it would help to keep prices of products low and competitive with other companies.

The owner of the Miller clothing company, Mr. Miller, did not wish to hire children at his factory because they would have to work long hours and the work could be dangerous. However, if he did not hire children workers his products would be more expensive and his business could fail and go bankrupt. In the end, Mr. Miller decided to hire child workers.

Questions to consider:

1. Was Mr. Miller right or wrong to hire child workers for his factory? Why or why not?

2. Did Mr. Miller have a right to hire workers in order to remain competitive?
Was it fair for him to do that?

3. In many other countries today it is normal for companies to hire child workers. If it is not against the countries laws, then is it wrong to hire children? Why or why not?

4. Should children under the age of 15 have a right to work in dangerous factories if they want? Why or why not?

5. Given all this information, what would have been the right thing for Mr. Miller to do in this situation?
