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EVROPSKÁ UNIE



MINISTERSTVO ŠKOLSTVÍ,
MLÁDEŽE A TĚLOVÝCHOVY



OP Vzdělávání
pro konkurenceschopnost

INVESTICE DO ROZVOJE VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

Číslo projektu	CZ.1.07/1.5.00/34.0394
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Škola	Střední odborná škola a Střední odborné učiliště, Hustopeče, Masarykovo nám. 1
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Název	English speaking countries
Téma hodiny	Britské lingvoreálie, Victorian period
Předmět	Anglický jazyk
Ročník/y/	3. ročník studijního oboru, 1. ročník nástavbového studia
Anotace	Prostřednictvím výukového materiálu se studenti seznámí s britskými lingvoreáliemi 19/ 20. Století, s historickým pozadím, a kde se toto projevilo v literatuře
Očekávaný výstup	Studenti pochopí souvislosti, naučí se důležitá a data, lépe pochopí historický odraz v britské literatuře té doby
Druh učebního materiálu	prezentace
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Background for The Victorian Period : literature

Historical Background

Victoria became queen in June 1837 and she reigned until her death on the 22nd of January 1901. During her reign Great Britain developed into role as industrial leader, with cultural and scientific progress. This was mainly shown in the Great Exhibition in London (1851), where Victoria opened the Great Exhibition in the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, in London. In 1859, British scientist Charles Darwin wrote his book about origin of human being. Charles Darwin's Origin of Species appeared there. He travelled around the world by ship and studied relations and dissimilarities among organisms. He realized that there exists competition among the individuals of one origin and only the strongest one survives. He also demonstrated animal origin of human being. 1870 started Franco – Prussian War (1870 – 71). 1901 queen Victoria died.

The Victorian England

We can say that budge from a way of life was based on the ownership of land to a modern urban economy, which was based on trade and manufacturing. It means that Great Britain had the world's power, more than 1/ 4 of all territory on the earth. On the other hand, social and economic problems caused to rapid and unregulated industrialisation. Many people went working to the cities. There were too many people and their big concentration caused that the price of labour force become reduced. Low level of living led to take advantage of children for working. They had to work in difficult conditions.

That is why this period carries negative phenomenon which is prostitution. The *role of women* was another than is in our days. There were only a few employment opportunities for “redundant” women, who were unmarried for the imbalance in number between sexes. Governesses were isolated within the household for their ambiguous status between servants. They could work like coal mine workers in factories but under gruelling working conditions. Or as prostitutes.

It was only the basic problem or political, economic and educational, but also the problem of how women were regarded, and regarded themselves, as member of society. This led to the Married Women's Property Act (1882), married women got the right to handle their own property. They also got the admission to go study universities by the end of Victoria's reign.

Reaction in Literature :

M. Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792) > J. S. Mill's *The Subjection of Women* and *On Liberty* (1959)

Coventry Patmore's "The Angel in the House" (1854 – 62), an immensely popular poem with the concept of womanhood stressing woman's purity and selflessness

T. Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* (1895) with the female protagonist justifying the leaving of her husband by quoting a passage from J. S. Mill's *On Liberty*

Women's education:

W. M. Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* (1847 – 48)

A. Tennyson's *The Princess* (1847)

Women's employment:

the governess novel: C. Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), W. M. Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, & oth.

Not only women's role in society was challenged. Elementary education became compulsory and universal – the Education Act (1870).

Later economic and social difficulties attendant on industrialisation, it is called "The time of Troubles". The first steam – powered public railway line in the world started to operate with also the first underground railway system.¹ But it had opposite side as well. Terrible conditions in the new industrial and coal – mining areas, where employment of women and children worked under more brutal conditions. This situation appeared in *Elizabeth Barrett-Browning's "The Cry of the Children" (1843*. People's Charter (1838 – 48), a large organisation of workers, advocated the extension of franchise and others legislative reforms.

R e a c t i o n s i n L i t e r a t u r e :

Thomas Carlyle's contrib. to the "Condition of England Question" in *Past and Present*

Benjamin Disraeli's *Sybil* (1845)

¹ JAROSLAV PEPRNÍK. A guide to British studies. Olomouc: Universita Palackého v Olomouci, 2006, str. 40.

THE MID – VICTORIAN PERIOD (1 8 4 8 – 7 0)

The Factory Acts (1802 – 78) which regulated the conditions of labour in mines and factories, child labour was restricted and working hours limited. Condition of the working classes improved. Abolition of rotten boroughs and redistribution of parliamentary seats also helped. An enormous expansion throughout the globe showed economic prosperity, the growth of Empire. Actually, as we said before, it was shown in the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park, which symbolised the triumphant feats of Victorian technology, even though it had serious conflict and anxieties beneath the placidly prosperous surface of the period.

Religious Controversy

The church of England had three divisions. Low Church, for strictly moral Christian life, was responsible for the emancipation of all slaves in the British Empire. Broad church was opened to modern advances. High church was holding to its original traditions against liberal tendencies.

The dominant figure among the original leaders was John Henry Newman (1801 – 90), a thinker, preacher, essayist, prose writer and poet of The Second Spring, which was revival of the Roman Catholic Church to which he converted after 3 years of persecution.

Reactions in Literature:

C. Dickens's attacks on the shortcomings of the Victorian society versus Anthony Trollope's more characteristic reflection of the mid-Victorian attitude towards the social and political scene.

R. Kipling's 'the White Man's burden', i.e. the moral responsibility for the expansion of empire versus Queen Victoria's mission 'to protect the poor natives and advance civilisation.

THE LATE VICTORIAN PERIOD (1 8 7 0 – 1 9 0 1)

It is a time of serenity and security, the age of house parties, long weekends in the country, delights in London entertainment. But the cost of empire apparent in colonial rebellions, massacres, and bungled wars, including the Boer war.

Reactions in Literature:

A sense of an overall change of attitudes appeared, for example

- attack on the mid-Victorian idols: Samuel Butler's (1835 – 1902) criticism of C. Darwin and A. Tennyson, and satire on family life in *The Way of All Flesh* (1903)

- notion of the pointlessness of the striving of the mid-Victorians

The Victorian poetry

Characteristics:

Poetry was developed in the context of the novel. The poets experimented with long narrative poems, for example A. Tennyson's *Maud*, E. Barrett-Browning's *Aurora Leigh*, R. Browning's *The Ring and the Book*, & oth. But according to public expectation poets should be sages with something to teach, but older generation poets discomfited with the public role. Younger generation poets distanced themselves from the public, embracing an identity as bohemian rebels. Poets experimented with characters and perspective : R. Browning's *The Ring and the Book* with the plot presented through 10 different perspectives, dramatic monologue, they used details to construct visual images – to show the poem's dominant emotion so that it brings poets and painters together.

The Victorian model

Characteristics:

Characteristically for the Victorian novel is dominant form, extraordinary, various style and genre. Charles Dickens started to write extravagant comedy, the Brontë sisters' gothic romance, W. M. Thackeray's satire, G. Eliot's psychological fiction. Also crime, mystery, and horror novels, sci-fi, detective stories, etc. appeared.

According to public expectation the novel should depict social problems to stimulate efforts for social reform. A sprawling, panoramic expanse in a serial form encouraging a certain kind of plotting, with multitude of characters. It all represents a large and comprehensive social world. It concerned that the protagonist's effort is to define his place in society. Women's protagonists who search fulfilment are symbolizing the human condition. There is also a certain spiritual grandeur ill-matched with meanness of opportunity. women for the 1st time major authors: J. Austen, the Brontës, E. Gaskell, and G. Eliot, the novel easily accessible for women writers, with the domestic life they knew well, not built on uni education, not burdened by an august tradition as poetry, etc.

The Victorian Prose (i.e. Non-fiction)

This term used to distinguish non-fiction prose writers from fiction writers and to stress the centrality of argument and persuasion to Victorian intellectual life. It includes history, biography, theology, criticism, etc.. It consequences with a wide range of controversial religiously, political, and aesthetic topics. Its function is didactic milion in urgent and moral issues.

The aesthetic movement

Early Victorian drama was a popular art form attractive to uneducated audience which demanded emotional excitement than intellectual subtlety. Vivacious melodramas did not, however, hold exclusive possession of the stage. But T. W. Robertson started with new realist drama. The 1890s were outstanding decade of dramatic innovation. Some plays by Shaw which appeared are, actually, not didactic, but instructive, with elements of socialism, science and philosophy. Art was independent for its having its own unique kind of value, “poetry must be judged as poetry and not another thing” (T. S. Eliot). We can see the difference among Anti-Victorians authors: the mid-Victorian earnestness of C. Dickens’s *David Copperfield* (1850) versus the late-Victorian comedy on earnestness of O. Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895).² The last heirs of the Romantics going back through D. G. Rossetti and A. Tennyson to J. Keats, but: the Romantic sensationalism developed into melancholy suggestiveness, world weariness, or mere emotional debauchery.

- the Aesthetes incl. O. Wilde, A. Beardsley, W. Pater, & oth. + The Rhymers’ Club members, incl. W. B. Yeats, Lionel Johnson, E. Dowson, John Davidson, Arthur Symonds, & oth.³

² BARNARD ROBERT. *Stručné dějiny anglické literatury*. Praha: Brána, str. 124.

³ BARNARD ROBERT. *Stručné dějiny anglické literatury*. Praha: Brána, str. 147.

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[http://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viktorie_\(britsk%C3%A1_kr%C3%A1lovna\)](http://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viktorie_(britsk%C3%A1_kr%C3%A1lovna))

Pokud není uvedeno jinak, autorem materiálu je Mgr. Gabriela Křížanová