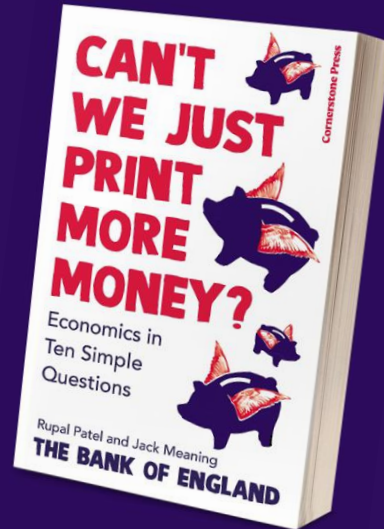




Lesson Three



ANALYSIS AND CRITICAL EVALUATION OF A TEXT

Lesson objectives

- To explore ideas connected with economic growth
- To consider the way writers over time have presented their viewpoints on industrialisation and growth
- To critically evaluate the ideas presented in Chapter Four through a literary lens



Getting you thinking...

Read the opening of Chapter Four on your worksheet and answer the following questions:

- List four things you learn about life in the 1970s.
- What do we learn about the wages people earned in the 1970s?
- How does this compare with 1900 and 1800?



Reflect on a key term

What explains these differences in wealth and quality of life across generations? The answer is **economic growth**. Broadly speaking – and with some notable exceptions – your quality of life is bound up with the level of growth: whether the economy is growing, shrinking or stagnating. And the general trajectory of the economy over the last 200 years has been to increase in size.

Extract from *Can't We Just Print More Money?* page 93



Thinking more deeply...

- Can you think of any reason for the changes in these figures?
- What might people be spending money on in the 2020s for example that they were not in 1800?
- What do you know about the **social context** of these times from reading in English Literature?

Year	Average weekly income in today's money
1800	£25
1900	£75
1970	£300
2020	£600



It was a town of red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it; but as matters stood, it was a town of unnatural red and black.

It was a town of machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever, and never got uncoiled.

It had a black canal in it, and a river that ran purple with ill-smelling dye, and vast piles of building full of windows where there was a rattling and a trembling all day long, and where the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down, like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness. It contained several large streets all very like one another, and many small streets still more like one another, inhabited by people equally like one another, who all went in and out at the same hours, with the same sound upon the same pavements, to do the same work, and to whom every day was the same as yesterday and tomorrow, and every year the counterpart of the last and the next.

These attributes of Coketown were in the main inseparable from the work by which it was sustained; against them were to be set off, comforts of life which found their way all over the world, and elegancies of life which made, we will not ask how much of the fine lady, who could scarcely bear to hear the place mentioned.

Extract from *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens (1854)



One scene especially lingers in my mind. A frightful patch of waste ground (somehow, up there, a patch of waste ground attains a squalor that would be impossible even in London) trampled bare of grass and littered with newspapers and old saucepans. To the right an isolated row of gaunt four-roomed houses, dark red, blackened by smoke. To the left an interminable vista of factory chimneys, chimney beyond chimney, fading away into a dim blackish haze. Behind me a railway embankment made of the slag from furnaces. In front, across the patch of waste ground, a cubical building of red and yellow brick, with the sign 'Thomas Grocock, Haulage Contractor'.

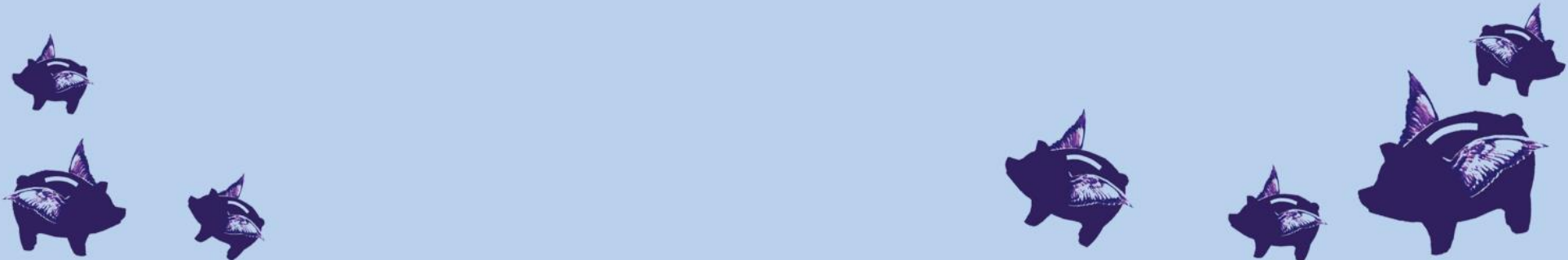
At night, when you cannot see the hideous shapes of the houses and the blackness of everything, a town like Sheffield assumes a kind of sinister magnificence. Sometimes the drifts of smoke are rosy with sulphur, and serrated flames, like circular saws, squeeze themselves out from beneath the cowls of the foundry chimneys. Through the open doors of foundries you see fiery serpents of iron being hauled to and fro by redlit boys, and you hear the whizz and thump of steam hammers and the scream of the iron under the blow.

Extract from *The Road to Wigan Pier* by George Orwell (1936)



Plenary questions

- Despite the fact that Dickens is writing about the impact of industrialisation and growth in the 1800s and Orwell is writing about the same topic in the 1900s, what points of comparison can you see in the language of both pieces?
- What do you think both writers are trying to tell us about the impact of growth on people's lives and the environment in which they live?
- **And what about today..?**



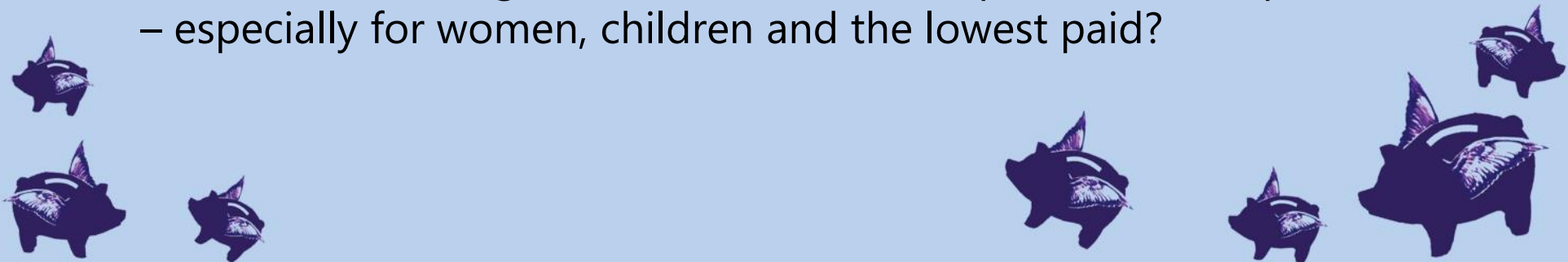
What price is paid for continuous economic growth?



Consolidating ideas from chapter four: Critical evaluation discussion

This chapter has invited us to reflect on some key ideas connected with the positives and negatives of economic growth. In your groups consider **one** of the following questions linked to those ideas:

- Does increased wealth bring increased happiness?
- Does continuous growth lead to the benefit or destruction of the natural world?
- New technology brings great benefits, but does it also come with a cost for some?
- Can the desire for growth contribute to inequalities and exploitation – especially for women, children and the lowest paid?



Bank of England



**YOU ARE AN
ECONOMIST
YOU JUST
MIGHT NOT
KNOW IT YET**



**THE
MUST-
READ
GUIDE**